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KING EDWARD VII AND HIS COURT

Some Reminiscences

By SIR LIONEL CUST, K.C.V.O.

With a Memoir of the Author

By the Hon. Lady Cust

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As Surveyor of the King's Pictures, as Gentleman Usher, and as personal friend, the late Sir Lionel Cust came much into touch with King Edward and his Court, not only when in attendance on State occasions, but also informally, as when discussing pictures with the King while he was in his dressing-room! After Queen Victoria's death all the royal residences had to be brought up to date, an immense work, about which King Edward was very keen and over which he allowed no dallying. Sir Lionel was always summoned to help, both as artistic expert and as personal adviser, and he took a very active part. He was an observer of discernment and humour, and his narrative, embellished by many excellent stories, will delight all those interested in the Edwardian epoch.

Some Press Opinions.

'Throws into attractive relief the tact and kindliness, the tenacity of will and shrewdness of judgment that are generally accepted as the qualities of Edward VII.'—*The Times*.

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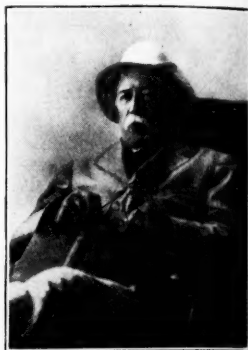
'The book sparkles with good stories and some amusing contretemps which bring out the intense humanness of the King. Quite the most intimate view of King Edward which has yet appeared.'—*Sunday Times*.

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BOOK NOTES FOR JULY

An intimate portrait of King Edward VII

THE late Sir Lionel Cust's book of reminiscences on *King Edward VII and His Court* has been published less than a week, as this goes to press, yet the instant demand for the book has been so great that a second printing is already in hand. 'Quite the most intimate view of King Edward which has yet appeared,' says *The Sunday Times*; 'the book sparkles with good stories and some amusing contretemps which bring out the intense humanness of the King.' Lady Cust has added an illuminating Memoir of her husband in the form of an Introduction to the volume.



SIR LIONEL CUST, K.C.V.O.

Professor Baldwin Brown's New Volume

THE issue of Part One of Volume Six of *The Arts in Early England* brings Professor Baldwin Brown's magnificent study a little nearer completion. This instalment concludes the treatment of the monuments of the great age of Northumbrian Art, all of which it was not possible to embrace in the limited space of Volume Five, by a full critical analysis of the Franks Casket. The contents of St. Cuthbert's coffin have been subjected to a fresh examination which has resulted in new views, which embrace also the Stonyhurst MS. of St. John's Gospel. The Hackness Cross is fully illustrated and discussed and an appendix is added on the Tassilo Cup. Professor Baldwin Brown has thought that it would be of value to those interested in notable mediæval masterpieces to have the Cup described and illustrated so as to facilitate further study.

An Indian love lyric

THE newest addition to The Wisdom of the East Series is *The Cloud-Messenger*, an Indian love lyric which has been translated from the Sanscrit of Kalidasa by Mr. Charles King. Kalidasa was an Indian poet born so long ago that until recently he was known simply as 'A voice that in the night of Time cried out on beauty.' His narrative tells the story of a cloud drifting across India from the Vindhya Mountains to the Himalayas, charged with the

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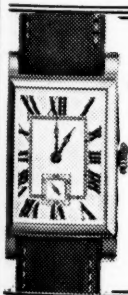
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message of a young lover to his beloved, from whom he has been parted for a year. In it the panorama of vanished cities, legendary lands and fairy palaces, the changing aspect of the cloud from dawn to sunset, the burden of sorrow and remembrance and the thrill of coming reunion, are woven into a single lyric of unsurpassed beauty.

Interesting, but serious, reminiscences

THE varied and many-sided life of Lieutenant-General Sir George MacMunn has furnished more than sufficient interesting material for an enjoyable volume of reminiscences, and his *Behind the Scenes in Many Wars* will undoubtedly prove most satisfactory reading. During his distinguished career he has had his share of limelight on the stage of war and also of highly responsible positions behind the scenes, in the very necessary work of keeping the military machine working properly. He has served in Europe, Asia and Africa, and has worked with many famous people. To him also is due much of the successful evacuation of the Dardanelles, while his opinions on many matters are well worth hearkening to.



LT.-GEN. SIR GEORGE MACMUNN

A fine literary family record

THE Morrisons of Glasgow are a remarkable literary family; with the coming of *Breakers* by Miss N. Brysson Morrison, four of them will be 'in print.' Miss Morrison is a sister of Mr. T. J. Morrison, a young writer whose first novel was published last year and whose second story, *Tony Potter*, is detailed in the next paragraph. A third member of the family, Miss Peggy Morrison, is a novelist; and a fourth, Mr. John Morrison, writes short stories for various magazines. *Breakers* tells the story of an impecunious minister's family living in a lonely Highland manse at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It shows how one member, to escape from the monotony of her life, created a crisis, but refused to face its issue, so that in the end it brought tragedy to her family. It tells of how one sought happiness in marriage,

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BOOK NOTES FOR JULY

another in success, and of how a third found it within herself. The scene is laid principally in the Highlands and in a village on the rocky, storm-bound coast of Scotland.

To Continue

MR. T. J. MORRISON's hero, *Tony Potter*, was born at a time when the relationship between parents and children was in a transition stage. The story shows the different outlooks of Tony and his sister. The girl denied the older generation's belief in the Divine Right of Parents to which the boy submitted—their father's influence adversely affecting his whole character. Although life brought success to Anthony Potter it was of little use to him, for he never gained what he most desired until he lost all that he had valued.



MR. T. J. MORRISON

Youth reveals Youth

'YOUTH's the season made for love,' wrote John Gay, and youth's the season for writing about love too, it would seem, in view of the spate of young novelists there has been during recent years. A new-comer to the ranks is Miss Alexis Macandrew, a nineteen-year-old girl who lives near Bournemouth and whose interest in the sea has influenced both her story and its title. *Down to the Sea* has for its characters the post-war youth—sophisticated, restless, frank, but attractive withal and ever doing the unexpected. Perhaps only modern youth can successfully portray modern youth. However that may be, it remains that this is an unusually vigorous story which convinces as it reveals.

He forsook History for Detective Fiction

A NEW star has swum into the detective firmament, namely Mr. Leonard Hollingworth, whose first story bears the uncompromising title, *The Body on the Bus*. The author is a young man, who was originally destined for a brilliant schoolmaster's career, but he forsook History for detective thrills, and continued with 'donkey work as a junior English master, teaching all the

THE CONGREVES

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FAMILY and military history can hardly show a parallel to the Congreves, both members of the same famous regiment, the Rifle Brigade, and both V.C.'s. Sir Walter lived to be a Corps Commander in France and subsequently Governor of Malta; while 'Billy' was cut off in the flower of his glorious youth at the age of 25, the first of all the army to be awarded the V.C., D.S.O., and M.C., and recommended for command of a brigade.

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dud forms of the school'—as he so frankly puts it—while he perfected his chosen art. For the setting of his dramatic murder he has chosen the top of an ordinary street bus, filled with people going home at night. Many revelations and complications are found to be connected with the outwardly ordinary passengers and the working out of the clues both by professional and by amateur detectives supplies a keen, lively interest all the time. The final solution will be found to tax the reader's ingenuity to the utmost.

For Spiritualists—and for those not convinced

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, in the Preface to his latest book, *The Edge of the Unknown*, gives the key to the purpose of the volume and one cannot do better than to quote his words. 'There is a passage in that charming book, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*,' he writes, 'which runs as follows: "She was one of these persons who have allowed their lives to be gnawed away because they have fallen in love with an idea several centuries before its appointed appearance in the history of Civilization. She hurled herself against the obstinacy of her time." We who believe in the psychic revelation, and who appreciate that a perception of these things is of the utmost importance, certainly have hurled ourselves against the obstinacy of our time. Possibly we have allowed some of our lives to be gnawed away in what, for the moment, seemed a vain and thankless quest. Only the future can show whether the sacrifice was worth it. Personally I think it was. Among the various chords which are struck in this little book there may be some to which the mind of the reader will respond, and which may entice him also in the search for the Holy Grail.'



SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

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PERHAPS no other word has such a varied emotional content among Spanish-Americans as *Adiós!* which is the title that Messrs. L. and V. S. Bartlett have chosen for their dramatic

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DAME HENRIETTA will not make time in the midst of her unceasing philanthropic activities to write her 'Reminiscences,' and her many friends have urged her to collect together a number of the articles she has contributed to the press. As these relate to all the Causes she has most at heart and contain a good deal of autobiographical material and many of her opinions and views, they furnish, in their collected and carefully arranged form, a very clear picture of the career and forceful personality of one of the most remarkable women of the age. The Dame has spent the whole of her long life, from early youth, in successful endeavours to promote schemes to bring education, love, and beauty within the reach of all, to level the barriers between class and class, and to unite them in a common desire for progress, spiritual, mental, and physical. Few women have seen their day-dreams materialise as she has, or when nearing the eighties, could rise as she has done from an attack of influenza and within a month set on foot two new and important associations. The dynamic energy that has enabled her to perform this feat is apparent on every page of this book, and it is also characterised by a strong sense of humour.

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romance. Intended as a greeting, *Adiós!* may yet have all the poignancy of a hopeless farewell. It means *Kismet*. It denotes happiness, sorrow, renunciation, amazement, or resignation. Much of the story of *Adiós!* is historical, based on the lives and exploits of Joaquin Murrieta, one of the most notorious bandits of the fifties, and Captain Harry Love, the famous Ranger. Its central figure is Pancho Delfino, a young Californian of Spanish descent who, returning to his uncle's ranch after the American conquest, is driven into outlawry. Known as the Puma, he organizes a band of desperadoes and becomes the Robin Hood of the country, harassing the hated gringos and befriending his own countrymen. Woven into this tale of adventure is a story of love—passionate, colourful, and moving.

A Scottish novelist with char-r-r-m!

MR. R. W. MACKENNA is a born story-teller, as all readers of his charming *Flower o' the Heather* will testify. And his stories are Scottish—all of them—with a flavour of humour and tragedy so artfully mingled that the reader is moved to smiles and tears by turns. His most recent volume, *O Rowan Tree*, is now added to Murray's Three-and-Sixpenny Novels. The book contains fourteen tales, homely, pathetic, humorous, and lofty in spirit, and the characters, when one has finished reading, seem almost to have entered into the realm of actual experience.

Next Month

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE for August will contain, among other contributions: *From the Archives of Albemarle Street. I. In the Forties*, by George Paston; sidelights upon books and writers of the period, based upon the correspondence of the House of Murray; the second part of *The Father of Father Mississippi*, by Lewis R. Freeman, containing many stories of the old Mississippi pilots and their doings; *Stareek*, the story of the best dog on Scott's Last Expedition, told by Frank Debenham, a member of the expedition; *Weimar in the 'Seventies*, by Sir George Douglas, Bt.; *Oscar Wilde at Afternoon Tea*, a pot-pourri of recollections, by Prof. A. H. Cooper-Prichard.

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JULY 1930

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

EDITED BY
LEONARD HUXLEY



JULY 1930.

	PAGE
THE NEW LAUREATE: A LYRIC POET <i>By Henry Charles Duffin</i>	1
THE RECKONING: A PLAY ON THE DEATH OF MARLOWE <i>By C. E. Lawrence</i>	10
THE EDUCATION OF THE EDUCATOR .. <i>By George Smith</i>	29
THE COUNTER-EXPEDITION: A SHORT STORY <i>By Laurence Halliday</i>	40
THE FATHER OF FATHER MISSISSIPPI—I. <i>By Lewis R. Freeman</i>	60
'THE JUDGE': A SHORT STORY .. <i>By Charles Riddell</i>	74
PUSS: VERSE IN TWO STYLES .. <i>By G. F. Bradby</i>	86
THE MYSTERY OF LEEDS CASTLE .. <i>By Mrs. E. V. Paterson</i>	89
JOHN BROOKE—ADVENTURER: A SHORT STORY <i>By W. M. Letts</i>	102
GILBERT AND SULLIVAN .. <i>By G. K. Chesterton</i>	110
LITERARY ACROSTIC NO. 83.. .. .	127

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THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JULY 1930.

THE NEW LAUREATE: A LYRIC POET.

BY HENRY CHARLES DUFFIN.

THE case of Mr. John Masefield has points of resemblance with that of Sir Walter Scott. Scott, born to write supreme prose and a few haunting lyrics, saw himself for long as a narrative poet. Masefield's reputation (apart from the group of admirable novels and other prose pieces) rests on those long narratives—a kind of epic of England in eight books—by which he has indeed marked himself out from the other major poets of the day; nevertheless, his poetic genius is essentially lyric.

Professor Saintsbury has said somewhere that if a lyric poet understands love he is safe for Parnassus. He is equally safe if he has been vouchsafed the vision of beauty; and Masefield has seen this vision. But for the purpose of narrative poetry he thought it necessary to put the vision resolutely behind him. Sometimes it refused to 'stay put,' but on the occasions when its light is completely darkened the result is disastrous. *The Everlasting Mercy* is, for the most part, a catalogue of crude and brutal assertions, not distinguishable from its own parody. The story wrested from the catalogue and from the interminable garrulity of the octosyllabic couplets is not a good story: the three steps by which the conversion of Saul Kane is brought about are not such as give any pleasure or satisfaction in the reading, and the attempt to show the inevitable approach of the merciful destiny is unconvincing. In the absence of poetic inspiration Masefield relied on impassioned ethics. This is the underlying weakness of *The Widow in the By-Street*. The time-honoured story of Jimmy and his mother, Anna and Shepherd Ern, is told with great pathos and humanity, but without artistic fervour, and Masefield fails to get tragedy out of the squalid misery. As with the whole, so with the parts.

'Life can be bitter to the very bone
When one is poor, and woman, and alone'—

it is pitiful and poignant, but it is prose, and awkward prose at that. The story is, as *The Everlasting Mercy* was not, a good one,

but it needed telling in ironic Hardian prose, not in Masfield's verse and sentiment. So too with *The Daffodil Fields*: the story here is one that demanded the novel form. All the psychology has to be left out in a poem of this length, with the result that much of the action and character-drawing, especially in the latter half, seems absurd and impossible. Consider only the incident where Lion, the hero, who has been represented throughout as entirely noble and wise, stabs his rival in circumstances of the most revolting treachery; whereupon

"You should not have done that," his stricken comrade cried.

Verse is supererogatory, and the rhyme frequently betrays to an addition quite lacking in significance. *The Daffodil Fields* must be the worst narrative poem ever written, and one is driven to wonder whether there was behind its composition some such satiric intention as is sometimes supposed to lie in Shakespeare's title, *As You Like It*.

There are other narratives into which another element enters, and which are altogether greater by reason of that element, but these that are supported by nothing but simple narrative purpose and moral earnestness fall far short of greatness. Masfield is not a born story-teller in verse, like Chaucer, Byron, Browning. The easy and rapid flow of narration, the organic unity of the narrative—the end implicit in the beginning—which are constant factors with these three, he cannot count upon. Each poem, not only in itself, but more especially in its choice of subject, has the effect of a *tour de force*, though in some cases a splendidly successful one. Even the ethical fervour, which never fails, is suspect: there are those who hold, with J. E. Flecker, that Masfield's sensitiveness to suffering is pure sham. Certainly the fact that Masfield is an apparently unrepentant fox-hunter suggests that the sympathies so nobly displayed in *Reynard* are assumed for a purpose.

A fallacy that vitiates some of Masfield's narrative work is the view, which he seems to hold, that a story-teller can at will decide upon prose or verse as the medium of the tale he is about to tell. In demonstration of this artistically unsound principle he did the dramatic episode of the trial of Jesus in both forms. Neither of the two resulting plays is quite successful: in both cases the effect produced wants the impressiveness of the original story. And one feels this must be partly due to the lack of flair for medium which allowed Masfield to hesitate between two forms and then

choose both. The situation should have been vehemently conceived as demanding either prose or verse. In the absence of such feeling, the adoption of verse in *Good Friday* fails to lift the play into the rare and strange atmosphere of poetry: the atmosphere in which Yeats's *Countess Cathleen*, for instance, moves; the atmosphere also of Masfield's own *Tristan*.

One remembers the relief with which one heard, at the time of its publication, that Masfield had chosen verse for *Tristan and Isolt*; one felt confident that this medium would permit him to handle the passionately beautiful theme with the full power and individuality of his genius, in which case his version was likely to rank with its half-dozen great predecessors. The fact that the latest *Tristan* is not only a narrative and dramatic success, but a considerable poetic achievement, is a tribute to the power of verse as verse. For the verse that Masfield uses here possesses few of those qualities by reason of which verse is a different medium from prose—a medium capable of lifting writer and reader bodily, as it were, into a new plane of feeling and understanding. The almost equal admixture of iambs and anapaests, the constant halts and breaks, the absence of compelling words—these colloquial factors make the bulk of the verse hardly like verse, in the rhythmic sense, at all. Of the two stresses, the sense stress and the metrical stress, the intermingling of which makes verse rhythm, the second is here (against the usual rule) entirely subordinated to the first. Nevertheless, the verse intention, the sense of verse, is there all the time, and this alone is sufficient to put Masfield into vital contact with the beauty of his theme: once in contact with beauty, Masfield is a poet, and his *Tristan* keeps those lyric heights on which his genius lies.

From the purely poetic point of view, Masfield's achievement is highest where his lyric quality comes into play, either by itself, or as an auxiliary to the narrative purpose. The lyric quality is not large or comprehensive, but it is fine within its limits. The limits are imposed by the fact that it requires the direct contemplation of beauty to arouse it. But of the reality of his inspiration in the presence of beauty there can be no doubt. Through some of the narratives, and through the not always adequate lyric medium of the lesser poems, there pulses, more obviously than with some greater poets, that passionate worship of beauty which perhaps only became conscious with Pater, Rossetti, and the eighteen-nineties.

'The dream that fires man's heart to make,
To build, to do, to sing or say,
A beauty Death can never take. . . .'

It is the presence of this lyric element that raises three of the narratives high above the others into a class by themselves. The stories of *Dauber* and of *Reynard the Fox* are heroic, but beyond this the theme and the setting of each possess a beauty on which Masfield's imagination struck fire; and his imagination fired his verse. The Dauber, himself the pilgrim of beauty, pursues his hopeless quest amid the terrible beauty of the sea. In consequence, the poem is studded with passages as fine as anything in literature other than the greatest of all. The lift and swing of inspiration, in word and rhythm, comes constantly.

'It was most proud, however self might doubt,
To share man's tragic fate and paint it true.'

In *Reynard* it is the beauty of the English scene that moves Masfield like the sea. The stanza form of the previous three poems (*The Widow*, *Daffodil Fields*, *Dauber*) had curbed the ceaseless trickle of *The Everlasting Mercy*, but was not continuous enough for the present purpose. For *Reynard*, Masfield was inspired to go back to the octosyllabic couplet, and got from it now just the necessary effect of flying speed. The verse is not rhythmic but epigrammatic—a genuine vehicle of poetry. There is poetic imagination as well as narrative force.

'The kestrel cruising over meadow
Watched the hunt gallop on his shadow,
Wee figures, almost at a stand,
Crossing the multi-coloured land,
Slow as a shadow on a dial.'

Rhyme inspires here, as when, caught in the cobbler's garden,

'The fox swerved left and scrambled out,
Knocking crinked green shells from the brussels-sprout';

which is perfect Keats in its modern domestic way.

The third narrative, this time one of the lesser ones, to achieve great excellence of a poetic kind is *King Cole*, and here pure beauty is the theme and inspiration. The poem sings. There is lift and power in the verse.

'Friends, fellow mortals, bearers of the ghost
That burns, and breaks its lamp, but is not lost,
This day, for one brief hour, a key is given
To all, however poor, to enter heaven.
The Bringers Down of Beauty from the stars
Have reached this city in their golden cars.
They ask, to bring you beauty, if you will.'

A splendid horse enters the ring followed by a clown—

'Like life, a beauty chased by tragic laughter.'

Two glorious stanzas at the end tell of King Cole, how

'He watched the night; then, taking up his flute,
He breathed a piping of this life of ours. . . .
The beauty and the truth that are our stars.'

Save for a trifle of dragging and doubt here and there in the story, not proper to so glowing a creation, the poem is an almost perfect artistic episode, only less than *Dauber* and *Reynard the Fox* because purely fantastic.

It is thus demonstrable that Masfield's success in narrative varies with the lyric inspiration of his theme. This inspiration, however, and its source—the direct contemplation of beauty—are of course more operative and more obvious in that minority of his poetry that is purely lyrical. Even here the same limitation is to be noticed. Save under the conditions named, the thrilling music, the magic phrase that are the touchstones of poetry are not present: many of the shorter poems are quite undistinguished. Even resonant lines like

'Laugh and be proud to belong to the old proud pageant of man'

are only inspired prose, while the whole difference between supreme verse and supreme poetry may be measured by the difference between *Cargoes* and Flecker's *The Old Ships*. Nevertheless it is here that is to be found the pure essence of Masfield's poetic quality, the spontaneous and inevitable utterance of the consuming passion for beauty by reason of which he is a poet.

Abstract beauty—the infinite beauty of the world, the hopeless dream of beauty in a world more perfect—draws him no less than the beauty of actual things. Beauty is his Muse.

'O Beauty, let me know again
The green earth cold, the April rain, the quiet waters figuring sky,
The one star risen.'

When he thinks of growing old, he cries,

'Be with me, Beauty, for the fire is dying.'

It is with him as with his own Atlanteans:

'They knew all beauty; when they thought,
The air chimed like a stricken lyre.'

The word 'beauty' is characteristic of Masefield, as 'solitude' is of Wordsworth; 'April' and 'wandering' are in frequent attendance. His definition of beauty is

'Eternal April wandering alone.'

And in *The Ship*, one of his finest achievements, the builders glory that

'Out of the rock, the tree, the springing herb
We built this wandering beauty so superb.'

Of all actual beautiful things sailing ships move him most deeply.

'I touch my country's mind, I come to grips
With half her purpose, thinking of these ships.'

And England's epitaph may be, he says,

'They built great ships and sailed them.'

One of his many sonnets—always in the English form, with its satisfying close, and gaining much by their frequently close following of the Shakespeare manner—runs thus:

'Forget all these, the barren fool in power,
The madman in command, the jealous O,
The bitter world biting its bitter hour,
The cruel now, the happy long ago.
Forget all these, for, though they truly hurt,
Even to the soul, they are not lasting things:
Men are no gods; we tread the city dirt,
But in our souls we can be queens and kings.
And I, O Beauty, O divine white wonder,
On whom my dull eyes, blind to all else, peer,
Have you for peace, that not the whole war's thunder,
Nor the world's wreck, can threat or take from here.
So you remain, though all man's passionate seas
Roar their blind tides, I can forget all these.'

But it is the *Lollington Downs* volume that most completely

shows Masfield lyrically possessed by beauty, and here, in a sequence of forty-five sonnets, is enunciated the troubled gospel of the desire that can never be satisfied. Beginning with a memory of youthful longings for beauty,

‘When God lived in a cottage up a brook,’

he dreams presently of coming face to face with beauty’s self, incarnate thought, eternal April; and wonders, now that he has ‘learned to speak,’ whether she would open to him some great revelation. He would surprise beauty’s secret, and for this purpose has explored the ‘windy midnight lanes’ of his flesh; and sometimes

‘Along my body’s alleys came a tune
Played in the tavern of the Beautiful . . .
But all has passed.’

He digresses to meditate on life—how it gives but a few vivid moments in a long dull strife—

‘A life upon the cross. To make amends
Three flaming memories that the death-bed ends.’

We live for a handful of years, then a few more in men’s minds, a little longer perhaps in a book or so—and what then? He tries anxiously to fathom the miracle of life, to penetrate to the Master Cell, the supreme atom.

Then he returns to the beauty theme—which always, but which alone, moves him to rhythm—with pity that the roses die so soon,

‘like those roses old,
Those women who were summer in men’s hearts. . . .
O myriad dust of beauty! . . .’

He sees again, as poets before have seen, how beauty dead is ‘pasture to living beauty.’ Like Hamlet, he wonders at the splendour and folly of man, and turns aside again to say there is no God:

‘There is no God; but we, who breathe the air,
Are God ourselves, and touch God everywhere.’

Yet where beauty has been the place is haunted—we thrill as we pass. As for him, having followed beauty, he stumbles from the crowd

'Into the darkness of a deeper hour,
Where in the lonely silence I may wait
The prayed for gleam. . . .'

Then comes a desperate mood. He rages that beauty goes unrecognized—

'that dog and I
The only two who knew her.'

Beauty knocks at the door and is not heard; beauty is betrayed. He is even driven to cry, sickening at man's lust for blood, 'there is no beauty'—and a note of agony is heard in this cry that was absent from the earlier denial. Having thus reached the nadir of despair, he suggests, in what is perhaps his noblest sonnet, the upward turn, through the impossibility of accepting the situation for as dark as it seems.

'If all be governed by the moving stars,
If passing planets bring events to be,
Searing the face of time with bloody scars,
Drawing men's souls even as the moon the sea,
If as they pass they make a current pass
Across man's life, and heap it to a tide,
We are but pawns, ignobler than the grass
Cropped by the beast and crunched and tossed aside.
Is all this beauty that doth inhabit heaven
Train of a planet's fire? Is all this lust
A chymic means of warring stars contriven
To bring the violets out of Cæsar's dust?
Better be grass, or in some hedge unknown
The spilling rose whose beauty is its own.'

And so comes hope: perhaps in some undiscovered planet roving dead space—

'One wandering thought in all that idiot mind'—

dwells Beauty, whose influence on us has so far given us but the longing for beauty—

'Which, on life's scarlet wax, for ever set
Longing for beauty bitten as a seal'—

but will in time raise for us the full flower of beauty, 'whose image haunts our days.' He sees a faint glow in the darkness, and in the great faith that the day will come, blesses the martyrdom that dooms him to have lived before the dawn.

Masefield's narratives stand secure. Besides the three master-pieces, there are several splendid stories splendidly told—*Right Royal*, *Enslaved*, *The Wanderer*—and some very fine shorter things, like *The Hounds of Hell* and *Cap on Head*, to say nothing of the *Salt Water Ballads*, which are nearly as good as Kipling, and in some respects better. But—bizarre as the comparison sounds—the relation of Masefield's narrative poetry to his poetic genius is rather that which exists in the case of Keats than of Byron or Browning. Byron's lyrics are negligible beside his narrative productions; Browning is supreme in both spheres. But though Masefield is, at his best, almost as far above Keats as a narrative poet as he is below him in lyric, nevertheless he was, like Keats, born to interpret beauty in song. His vision, as distinct from his talent, is narrow but clear. On a score of the more obvious of man's activities he will turn you out verse that is nearly always workmanlike and satisfying, seldom anything more. But let the thought of the wonder, the power of beauty enter his mind—it almost needs the word 'beauty' itself—and he becomes all passion and dream, while his medium pulses with a new life, a rhythm that makes us ache and dream with the poet. With the greater lyric poets this happens all, or nearly all, the time. Mr. De La Mare has but to mention a donkey or a snail and the miracle takes place, but the more limited degree to which it unmistakably occurs with Masefield gives him a place in lyric poetry higher, if less broadly based, than that which he holds in narrative by reason of *Dauber*, even of *Reynard the Fox*.

THE RECKONING.

TELLING POSSIBLY THE TRUTH OF THE DEATH OF
CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.¹

BY C. E. LAWRENCE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.

ROBERT POLEY.

INGRAM FRIZER.

NICHOLAS SKERES.

JENKIN, a Tapster.

ELEANOR BULL, an Innkeeper.

SCENE.—*The Inn kept by ELEANOR BULL in Deptford Strand on the afternoon of May 30, 1593. It is a shabby room, with a high, open, empty fireplace at the back. There is a wooden table with wooden plates and earthenware mugs and rough black-handled knives with stools and benches. A settle runs along the left side underneath a window, with bottle-glass, looking out on a garden. A backgammon board and pieces rest on the window-sill. Beyond the window is a door (L) open, with a step up to it leading to the garden. A second door to the house is at the R. of the fireplace.*

JENKIN, the Tapster, is setting in place the chairs and stools which had been clustered beside the table. He is an elderly man, girt with an apron over his workaday clothes.

Enter the hostess, ELEANOR BULL. She is like most of the landladies of unwritten history, fussy, opinionated, unimaginative and very greedy.

BULL. Where is the company, Jenkin?

JENKIN. In the garden, mistress.

BULL. Have they paid their reckoning?

JENKIN. Not yet, mistress. The feast is not done.

BULL. Feasting? Do they make a day and a night of it?

¹ Acknowledgment is due to Dr. F. S. Boas, that brilliant guide among the Elizabethan writers, and his little book, *Marlowe and his Circle: A Biographical Survey*, for the historical groundwork of this play.

JENKIN. So it would seem, mistress. They came this morning at ten of the clock—or three of them did. The poet followed.

BULL. A poet with them? Then we may well look among the clouds for our reckoning.

JENKIN. 'Tis Master Marlin. They call him Marlowe, but I call him Marlin. A brave and lusty heart. His verses sing at the mouth like a joy of thunder.

BULL. You speak like a poet yourself, and you but an old tapster.

JENKIN. Ah, mistress, in my time I have carried banners and been a marching soldier and a captain, too, of armies at Jamey Burbage's Theatre; and I've a grandson who in this sennight is to play a murderous damsel in an Italian comedy. Merry and full of death.

BULL. Peace with your old-time chatter! See they pay their reckoning or call me at their return and I'll soon come aboard them, I promise you. I'm not a widow to be put upon by a parcel of riming rascallions.

JENKIN. Go warily, mistress! They are masterful men.

BULL. I'll master them.

JENKIN. There is Robin Poley¹ with a tongue like a dagger, a dangerous man; and the one they call Frizer who would as soon pick a quarrel as say a prayer and sooner, for the name of God would surely stick in his throat; and Master Nicholas Skeres who, if I weren't a poor drawer, I should say was born to dangle loutishly in a rope-noose.

BULL. And what of your poet?

JENKIN. He too is a masterful man, but of nobler spirit than those. He should be warier of the company he keeps. Called me Old Noddikins, and said I was the image of a stone demon on the great church of Paris.

BULL. Well, that won't bring their reckoning. This comes of my going to Greenwich fair, spending the long day between thimble-magic and ginger-breads and the world's fat women and other monsters.

JENKIN. Master Marlin will pay you, mistress, if the others are knaves. His gold is of the true metal and the child of his work and wit.

BULL. I want our reckoning from a healthy pouch, not a poet's promising.

¹ Pronounced 'Pooley.'

JENKIN. They'll pay, mistress, if they know you're here. You might cudgel the ears of Tom Cook. Master Poley gave orders for a veal pasty loaded with garlic and pigeons' eggs, and he can't abide to linger for his victuals.

BULL. And he may look for his pigeons' eggs. But I will cudgel the ears of Tom gladly. I saw the new American roots to-day.

JENKIN. Mr. Raleigh's new roots?

BULL. Yes. Potatoes they call them. Muddy brown things full of wax. Nobody will ever eat them. I am told their taste is sweet and nasty. They'll not wed happily with English mutton.

JENKIN. I don't hold with these new-fangled discoveries. The world's going too fast. My heart's with the old days and the things our fathers held by.

BULL. And I don't see what it is to you—talking to me like a man of words yourself. Get on with your work, Dan Jenkin; and don't forget I'm mistress of this house.

JENKIN. A man of my years must have his notions.

BULL. But not to say them when you're paid the wages I pay for your labour and work. One shilling and tenpence a week and victuals enough to feed a troop of constables. Get on with it, I say; and be sure to collect our reckoning or let me know; and now I'll go cudgel the lazy wits of Tom. Veal pasty, forsooth, and pigeons' eggs!

(Exit ELEANOR BULL, R. *By this time the dinner-table and the room are ready in their bare simplicity. JENKIN goes to the garden-door and then speaks as though answering.*)

JENKIN. Ay, 'twill soon be ready, good masters.

(Enter POLEY and SKERES L. *The former, a sinister person, is well dressed, though his clothes are travel-worn. He wears a sword as do all the men. He tosses his plumed hat and cloak on to a chair. SKERES is of coarser clay, a rough man, with poor brains.*)

POLEY (to JENKIN). Out!

JENKIN. Your worship?

POLEY. Out, fellow! I desire to be alone with Master Skeres. And see that the dinner is served before six strikes.

(Exit JENKIN R.)

Skeres, this Marlowe is blind, obstinate, deaf or wilful, and he is dangerous.

SKERES (*who talks in a slow gloomy bass*). Slit his throat, say I. I've no love for such gallants. There is no moon to-night, and the river will carry him seawards without blabbing. Old Thames is hungry for corpses.

POLEY. Hush! You may think these pretty thoughts, but not say them in an inn. Every cupboard has its keyhole and the walls and passages whisper, though I believe this room is safe. I wish to speak with Ingram Frizer.

SKERES. I'll call him.

POLEY. Nay, I wish to speak with Frizer alone. I have purposes. I brought you within doors that you could return to the garden and keep Marlowe in conversation while Frizer comes to me. When I am ready you can return with Master Thunderer. The time has come for a settlement.

SKERES. My sword is athirst—

POLEY. Oh, peace to your swaggering! 'Tis such as you breed cowards. You talk too much.

SKERES (*blustering*). S'Death!

POLEY. Silence, Nick—don't waste breath in useless anger. We have work to do; and I must think. And be especially silent when alone with Marlowe.

SKERES. I'll not breathe—

POLEY. Not a word of our purpose. Talk of—

SKERES. What? I know no poetry. There was a murder in Walworth on Saturday forenoon—

POLEY. Talk of that. Truly, murder will be better than poetry from your lips, and safer than your discretion. Talk of anything but of what has brought us—and Marlowe—here. Or you need not talk. He will do that readily. As we have found. Of glory and golden emperors and the storm-winds that blow out his windy verses. But he must not enter this room until I have called to you.

SKERES. And if Marlowe wishes to come with Frizer?

POLEY. You must prevent him. It will spoil my plans if he comes in.

SKERES. He'll not come in then. I'll beat him to mummy first.

POLEY. No violence—yet. It may be necessary afterwards—but then it may not. We shall try the ways of friendship; and if they fail—

SKERES. I hope they will fail. I mislike his airs of a crowing captain.

POLEY. Nay. He may yet be useful to us and to those we serve. Now go. Keep him among the flowers and fruit trees. He then will spout his verses to his heart's content about blossoms and birds as poets do at every springtime. Send in Frizer.

(Exit SKERES to garden. While he is gone POLEY opens the door at the R. leading to the house and having examined the empty passage, quietly closes the door and puts a bench against it. He then stands in moody thought with his hands behind him.)

(Enter FRIZER L. He is dressed in finery somewhat worn.)

Frizer, we must consider and act.

FRIZER. Marlowe is wary.

POLEY *(as he shuts the garden-door)*. I fear that he knows too much and to-morrow it will be too late. Watch the garden.

(FRIZER looks through the window and listens to POLEY, while resting a foot upon the settle.)

It comes to this. He bends to our wish or—there is no easier way—he must die.

FRIZER. Not here.

POLEY. We dare not wait until to-morrow. He must not escape from our hands.

FRIZER. I asked him to come here as you desired. He has eaten my bread. It would be the treachery of Judas.

POLEY. Put those weak thoughts aside.

FRIZER. Do you mean murder?

POLEY. I mean the safety that comes with the death of him who is dangerous.

FRIZER. I mind not any man's death, Robin Poley, as you know; but this would be most dangerous. Marlowe's death would bring a speedy revenge.

POLEY. But accidents may happen to all of us. Accidents! A kitten my wife dotes on was caught by a mousetrap this morning.

FRIZER. The axe for you and the hangman for me if we ventured and failed.

POLEY. Is not life from the beginning one long risk? And have not I risked my life daily for a score of years? Have courage, man, and burnish your wits. Hearken to me.

FRIZER. He was my guest.

POLEY. And we'll give him his belly full. Come, Ingram. We have run hazards together and this is one more. We can make it easy by thinking. To-morrow the Lords of the Privy Council arrest Marlowe.

FRIZER. Are you certain of this?

POLEY. I have eyes and ears everywhere in those places.

FRIZER. Why have you not told me of this earlier?

POLEY. I have been biding my time. I say nothing more than I must.

FRIZER. You are a dangerous friend, Poley.

POLEY. Peace! Marlowe will be arrested to-morrow; and if he is caught by them he may blab.

FRIZER. Of us!

POLEY. Who else have we to take care for? Others may guard their necks as best they please, but I am my own good friend. Marlowe is dangerous. He knows too much.

FRIZER. Cannot Skeres stab him when it is dark?

POLEY. Skeres is a block. He would stab him readily and cast his body into the Thames if we could wait his hour; but Marlowe must give his promise on oath to us, or he must not leave this inn alive. We must contrive an accident.

FRIZER. I like it not.

POLEY. Nor I. But qualms like these given way to in the thick of an enterprise bring ruin. We are at so grave a pass—you and I—that we have no alternative. It is Marlowe's death or mine—ours.

FRIZER. I will not kill.

POLEY. Make no pledge with yourself. One of us must kill him, and whether it be you or I, or Nicholas, who strikes the blow it must be without pause or witnesses.

FRIZER. Does he know of the arrest?

POLEY. He cannot. In our talk in the garden I sounded him in words which he must have understood had he known of it.

FRIZER. He is my friend—my guest.

POLEY. He is, I fear, our enemy. Do you believe that I want to kill a man if I can forestall it?

FRIZER. I think that you have a complete indifference to the death of others.

(POLEY *laughs quietly. It is brief and simple laughter, yet sinister.*)

POLEY. We will call him in. Leave the main talk with me,

but do not fail to support me in what I say. And if it come to the necessity of death, let Skeres strike if he show the inclination. The world can better spare Nick Skeres than either of us.

FRIZER. I like this caution. It is the prudence of a master.

POLEY. We have to see whether Marlowe would betray us to the Council. If he would so—then it must be death.

FRIZER. Then it must be death. I will be with you now in this, Robin. (*The clock strikes six.*)

POLEY. It is the hour for dinner. Open the door, Ingram.

(FRIZER opens the garden-door while POLEY removes the bench from before the door leading to the house. He opens, and calls.)

Drawer! (*There being no answer he calls again and knocks with his fist impatiently, on the open door.*) Drawer! Drawer!

JENKIN (*from without*). Anon, sir!

(*Enter JENKIN.*)

POLEY. You stay at a safe distance, friend.

JENKIN. I was at work in the kitchen, good Master Poley.

POLEY. Did you not hear the church bell?

JENKIN. Ay, sir. But 'tis the veal pasty that commands. The church bell comes second.

POLEY. My orders come first.

JENKIN. Nay, sir.

POLEY. What, sir? I'll lay my sword about your shoulders, fool!

JENKIN. The pasty will not be done for another half-hour or so, says Tom the Cook, and no swordsmanship can mend the fire's delay.

POLEY. The devil take Tom the Cook, and the whole tribe of tapsters.

JENKIN. I thank you for the blessing of God, sir, for I take that as the true meaning of a curse in the name of the devil.

POLEY. What! Art philosopher, fellow? Insolent too, forsooth?

JENKIN. Will you drink wine, sir? We broached a barrel of sack o' Tuesday. 'Tis a kindly drink, and the pasty will soon be done.

POLEY. Yes. We will drink sack. Speed!

JENKIN. And the mistress said, Will you pay the reckoning?

She made out this paper of expenses to the noon dinner-time.
(*He proffers a bill which is ignored.*)

FRIZER. The expenses are mine, Jenkin.

JENKIN. The mistress has said—

POLEY (*roaring*). Plague take the mistress and all that she said! Fetch the drink, sirrah; and, Frizer, call Nick and the merchant of tall words from the garden.

JENKIN. Mistress Eleanor Bull—

FRIZER. It shall be paid by me, tapster. At the end of this evening. We are hungry and 'tis past six o'clock.

(*Exit FRIZER to garden, and reluctantly JENKIN to the house.*)

POLEY (*thoughtfully*). We must anger him. He should assault us; and then it will be easy.

(*Re-enter FRIZER followed by MARLOWE and SKERES. CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE, aged 29, is richly rather than carefully dressed. He removes his sword and belt and flings them carelessly into a chair. He is broad-built, powerful, bright-eyed and full of the vitality of life. He wears a small beard.*)

MARLOWE. There broods our Machiavel. Hail, dark spirit!

POLEY. Kit, I want some thoughtful words with you.

MARLOWE. Words and more words. They're the chief fruit that garden seems to grow. Here has old Nick's loving grandson been telling me of the many times he's been murdered in his past twenty-nine lives.

(*Enter JENKIN with a big jug of sack.*)

But here is inspiration. Listening is thirsty work.

FRIZER. And 'tis little you hearkened to any of us, Kit.

MARLOWE. I was silent as a tombstone all the time that our mirthful Robin here, and you, Ingram, and this little lad Nicholas poured out dry and doleful streams of utterance. Jenkin, you've brought light. (*He loosens his cloak and hangs it on a chair beside the table.*)

JENKIN. The mistress again says 'The reckoning.'

MARLOWE. I'll pay her, Jenkin.

FRIZER. 'Tis my affair, Kit. You are my guest.

POLEY. She must wait, tapster. And, perhaps, as he has said, Master Christopher Marlowe will pay.

JENKIN. Mistress Bull will sour my ears with her shrill talk, if the reckoning is not paid.

POLEY. Go, fellow! (*Takes and urges him out of the room, closing the door after him. Again places the bench before the door.*)

MARLOWE (*pointing to the bench*). Why do that?

POLEY. I'm weary of the woman's clamour for the reckoning. The reckoning! Are we not men of honour?

MARLOWE. I have promised that I will pay. 'Twill all be well.

POLEY. I'm glad to hear that, Marlowe. For we also have come to a reckoning with you.

MARLOWE. Plague take this talk! Come, Frizer. Let us drink and be merry. The sunshine of that garden has been darkened since noon with many words meaning something or nothing.

FRIZER. Let us rejoice for a time, Robin. Gay hearts are best.

POLEY (*darkly*). Rejoice! Very well. (*They pour out sack in the mugs on the table.*)

MARLOWE (*raising his mug*). Queen Bess!

POLEY. Let us drink to no healths but our own; and some of us may need it.

MARLOWE. Grammercy, darkness and more darkness! Have done with these airs of doom, friend Poley. It does not march with the joy and sunshine of the garden and the day.

SKERES. Let us be merry, lads! At any hour the worst and best of us may be hanged.

MARLOWE. You too, young Nick? I'm for gladness and merriment. The birds, hark at them; so let us be glorious too. Life is the golden thing. Let us forget Death until we must; and then, please the gods, we shall lose all remembrance of it. Here is to zestful life, and love, and glorious womanhood! I'll never die! (*He drinks again.*)

FRIZER (*to POLEY*). Come, Robin. Let us be merry till the pasty comes.

MARLOWE. A pasty! Good! I have the hunger of a regiment of huntsmen. But this is a tricky wine. (*Looking in his mug and placing it on the table.*) It was a tricky wine.

(POLEY *refills his mug.*)

Nay, Robin. Yourself too! I like an equal drinker. Frizer, you are slow in the cup. But Nicky Skeres, he drinks like a warrior full of thirst.

SKERES. I like my fill of wine and fighting.

MARLOWE. Ay. We know well what you would say, for you have said it a hundred times in the garden. But now we are dwelling on the thought—not of blood, but of wine and the goddesses called women. Love!—

FRIZER. And Mistress Bull, the keeper of this inn.

MARLOWE. Let us not remember the breathing blots; the blotches on life. Who's for a game of tables? Here are a board, dice and the pieces.

POLEY. No.

SKERES. Backgammon is a goodly game. I have lost testers over it and groats, ten or twenty. It made me a poor man.

FRIZER. No, good friends, talk is ever the jolliest fare till the pasty is ready.

MARLOWE. Laughter and good talk and the wine that warms the heart and the wits; and all in the company of a sea-coal fire.

FRIZER. Who wants to be at a fireside when the sun of May-time paints the fields of Earth with brightness?

MARLOWE. A thought of poetry. Welcome, brother! Let sour hearts brood over the crack of doom and death; we are for sunny skies and flowers enriched by the sunlight of Heaven. I saw a fairy yestermorn who was turned the moment after into an old old dame, an ancient beldame, gathering faggots.

POLEY. Folly! Folly! Thoughts of folly!

MARLOWE. Robert Poley! Sweeten your brain, man, with mirth and kindness. An apothecary's ounce of poetry is worth shiploads of dark fortune which has no glint of laughter to lighten the cargo.

POLEY. You talk of poetry as if you were the only poet in the world.

MARLOWE. Am I not the leading poet of England and the Earth? Come, truth is truth! Who may wear the wreath of laurel if not I?

POLEY. I read some pages of a book of new verse last week. I, the sour heart, that broods on doom and death!

MARLOWE. By a new poet?

POLEY. His name was new to me.

FRIZER. Who was it?

POLEY. A fellow named Shakespeare.

MARLOWE. An actor. And not a good actor. You speak of *Venus and Adonis*.

POLEY. Ay.

MARLOWE. Pleasant stuff, pretty fancies, daintily done—he has the trick of it; with it may be, the promise of passion. But has it power?

POLEY. What do you mean by power in poetry?

MARLOWE. Power! By the living God——

POLEY. In whom you do not believe!

MARLOWE. And Moses, His Juggler, and Balaam's talking ass, in whom I do *not* believe—But let the gods sleep! Power—it is the strength, the force, the vitality and very life-blood of poetry. Infusing the words that leap from the actor's lips, it moves the heart like the trampling of armed legions marching towards victory with their banners ablaze in the sun and the clarion trumpets challenging. Without power, poetry is, at best, the soft, sweet lamenting of hearts in a dream, the easy and simple murmuring of shepherds piping to their sheep. Excellent in its miniken way, but nothing.

POLEY. Is *Venus and Adonis* nothing? Is the genius of Master Shakespeare to be nothing?

MARLOWE. How can we say yet? A poet grows; but Master Will Shakespeare, whom I know in a passing fashion, for I have paid him more than twice for minding my horse on Bankside—a thin tall man with a broad country speech and shyness—I see no promise of greatness or power in him. Let him write plays, and that will prove him. When out of his store of vision and thought he builds a Tamburlaine, a Jew of Malta, a Doctor Faustus, an Edward the Second, then will I, too, throw up my cap and cry joyfully for a new—another—poet come to England; as then, besides his gifts of fancy and music and amorous play, there will be power. But I see nothing of that yet. I cannot be sure, Poley, that your new poet has even ambition, without which also a poet is nothing.

SKERES. It is time we had food. There was talk of a veal pasty.

FRIZER. That's the poetry I'll best like at this hour. Men of rime may wrestle and wrangle in their jealousies, but soldiers and men of politics must eat.

MARLOWE. Let us eat, and not remember politics. The State can wait till after supper-time.

POLEY. Remove the bench, Ingram; and shout for the tapster.

MARLOWE. Why was the bench put there ?

POLEY. There was a draught of wind through the keyhole.

MARLOWE. What do you mean by that, Poley ?

POLEY. I do not remember now. It has a meaning we may discover after supper-time.

MARLOWE. But this is suspicious. What do you mean by these evasive words ?

POLEY. Nothing, Marlowe, nothing. Come, fill again your cups with sack.

FRIZER (*calling at the door which he has opened after removing the bench*). Tapster !

JENKIN. Anon, sir. (*He enters.*) The pasty is ready, and here is a loaf of bread and some cheese new-come from Holland. (*He places platters of bread and cheese on the table, and exit. FRIZER re-closes the door.*)

MARLOWE. I've no wish for food now.

POLEY. Let us eat while we may. To-morrow we may go hungry. Or feed—others.

MARLOWE. There is a half-thought unexpressed in all that you say.

POLEY. We will not trouble over half-thoughts while we have appetites to mend. Fill your cups, Ingram, Skeres.

MARLOWE. I'll drink nothing more until I know what you mean.

POLEY. Then I fear you'll be a dry stick before the moon is full.

MARLOWE. Is this a jest ?

FRIZER. It is no jest.

MARLOWE. You too, Frizer ?

SKERES. And I too, master. We have business with you.

POLEY. Not yet. After supper-time.

(*Enter JENKIN bearing a large pasty in a dish, which he sets on the table.*)

Here comes the pasty. Welcome, good tapster. That will do, Now go ! Speedily !

MARLOWE. Jenkin, I wish you to stay.

POLEY. You must go.

JENKIN. I must go, Master Marlin, but I should be glad to stay to hear your brave laughter and song of wit ; but the mistress has called to me to help serve in the kitchen.

SKERES. 'Tis a fine pasty.

JENKIN. And here is the reckoning on a new bill. The mistress, she says—

POLEY. We are coming to the reckoning presently. It will soon be paid—now.

JENKIN. She will clout me and cudgel me well if I take her no coins for answer; and will come here herself, so there's no escape from the payment.

POLEY. We do not pay before we have eaten. Are we upstarts? Are we vagabonds? Should we cozen a poor widow-woman wanting her pence?

JENKIN. I must do as you will, sirs. (*Exit JENKIN R.*)

POLEY. Both doors, Frizer!

(*SKERES shuts and bolts the garden-door, while FRIZER shuts that (R.) leading to the house and replaces the bench against it. MARLOWE, who until now has been openly easy-going, watches these proceedings alertly.*)

MARLOWE. What does this mean?

POLEY. The reckoning.

MARLOWE. Is this how you have been thinking here and in the garden through the long talk of this day? (*While MARLOWE was speaking thus to POLEY, SKERES hides in the fireplace MARLOWE's sword and belt.*) Answer! I felt there was something behind your words. What was it?

POLEY. Prithee, sit!

MARLOWE. No.

POLEY. Sit and I will tell you, for as Skeres has said, we have business to do with you.

MARLOWE (*looking at the chair*). Where is my sword? This is treachery.

POLEY. Fear not.

MARLOWE. Fear? I?

POLEY. There is no need to fear if you are truthful.

MARLOWE. I fear? There is a destiny guarding me even against death. I was born to a greatness still not fulfilled.

POLEY. No more wind of words, Marlowe. Sit!

MARLOWE. No!

POLEY. Then stand. Frizer, Nicholas, watch the doors.

(*They move to the doors. FRIZER stands by the window looking out.*)

MARLOWE. I hold for you a mighty contempt, Master Poley. You are a foul knave and a trickster—as I know—but you cannot kill one who is called by the powers of Heaven—be there gods or not—to shine as a poet supreme for the glory of England.

POLEY. These words are too many. Kit Marlowe, we should wish to be friends with you. We have hoped to find, from the deliberations of this day whether or not you were our loyal comrade, serving like interests with ours; but nothing certain has followed from our questionings.

MARLOWE (*looking to FRIZER*). I have drunk the wine and eaten the bread of treachery.

FRIZER. No, Christopher. Hearken to Master Poley. I love you.

MARLOWE. Love! That thought is a blasphemy worse than my atheism, as they call it.

POLEY. You have served—is it the Queen or was it against the Queen? In whose counsels are you and were you?

MARLOWE. My services are bound in secrecy.

POLEY. Yet we must know. Six years ago, while still you were a Cambridge scholar, you went to Rheims. Why?

MARLOWE. My services were secret.

POLEY. I ask you. We all ask!

MARLOWE. You have no right to ask, nor I to answer.

POLEY. So long ago does not endanger anyone now.

MARLOWE. No, and I will tell you, for that will break no promise or oath sworn. But—no—I will not tell you. Why should I? Swordless and defenceless as I am (*again he looks round for his sword*)—fool that I was to trust you—I have no duty to you or fear for any or all of you. I am destined to a life of triumph, as I know.

POLEY. How do you know? You, without faith in God?

MARLOWE. Without faith in the childish nonsense told about God. That is the difference; and what is your Christian faith, Master Robert Poley, and Ingram Frizer, who called me here in the sacred name of hospitality, and Nicholas Skeres, bully and cut-throat saint of Christ?

SKERES. 'S death! (*He half-draws his sword and then re-sheathes it.*)

POLEY. Six years ago you went to Rheims to discover what might be the efforts of the Catholics in Europe to help Philip of Spain in his purposed invasion of England.

MARLOWE. Yes.

POLEY. Ah! So you then were the loyal servant of the Queen; or were you on the Spanish side?

MARLOWE. Whatever I did I will not tell you now. Your hiding of my sword is the proof of your falseness and enmity, and of your fear.

FRIZER. No, Christopher.

MARLOWE. Silence your false tongue, Ingram Frizer. Are you now on my side in these dangers? (*A brief pause.*) No answer!

FRIZER. I have silenced my tongue, Master Marlowe; and now I am your enemy.

MARLOWE. *Now* my enemy. Have you been my friend once in these seven or eight hours—or years?

POLEY. We waste time. The pasty is cooling.

MARLOWE. And the cheese grows stale. Eat, masters, and murder while you may!

POLEY. In the recent months you have been to France.

MARLOWE. I, too, will silence my tongue.

POLEY. You must speak. We are three to one against you.

MARLOWE. Give me my sword. Play the man's game.

POLEY. Was it in the aid of Henry the Fourth, or not, to restore the Protestant Faith to France? We must know.

MARLOWE. I answer nothing. I have given oaths.

POLEY. Then you must surely die.

MARLOWE. I cannot die at your hands. My work is not ended. I am destined to live for fulness of years and for ever.

POLEY. Fool! You play with the thought of immortality. Not even poets are better than worms' meat.

MARLOWE. I have my work to do. Let me go, and this threatening shall be forgotten.

POLEY. No. We fear that you know too much.

MARLOWE (*taunting*). Who fears now?

POLEY. You are a fool whose voice must be muted. A warrant for your arrest is out and will be served to-night or early to-morrow.

MARLOWE. Who has issued it?

FRIZER. The Lords of the Privy Council.

(MARLOWE stands a moment in thought.)

MARLOWE. Then I will go to them. With them my cause is clear; and my duty plain.

POLEY. But who will be involved?

MARLOWE. Ah! These are riddles that some will be loath to read.

POLEY. Marlowe, you stand on the brink of eternity.

MARLOWE. We all are standing on the eternal brink, and to some the ravine beneath (*he looks pointedly at POLEY*) is black with hideous promise. Beware, my bullies, and flee while there is time! I warn you.

FRIZER. You warn—us?

MARLOWE. I speak while there is time. That warrant finds me ready.

POLEY. What do you know of us?

(MARLOWE *laughs and backs towards the garden-door; but FRIZER blocks the way.*)

That laughter is dangerous. It spells your doom.

MARLOWE. You cast no spell of doom; and if you did, then would I die with laughter on my lips scorning you. I know you, Master Poley, and them—Judas Frizer and Bully Skeres.

(SKERES *draws his sword, FRIZER moves towards MARLOWE.*)

Poley, the snake that crept into the houses of great ones and with his treachery brought them to bloodiest death. If I die now—and I shall not die by your hands; I have faith in the purposes of the gods—I will prove that I know you—spy, Newgate prisoner and maker of false coins, whose treachery brought Anthony Babington and Mary of Scotland to the scaffold; who helped to bring ruin to Christopher Blunt and—

POLEY (*shouting*). Your death! Your death! (*He draws his sword.*)

MARLOWE. Frances Walsingham; who spied on Philip Sidney and his lady!—Dirt! Slime of Satan! The cruellest spawn of Hell!—

POLEY. Death!

(MARLOWE *springs aside.*)

MARLOWE. Your dagger, Frizer.

(*He seizes FRIZER and draws his dagger, throwing him down; but FRIZER returns and with POLEY closes upon him. MARLOWE falls back on the settle, struggling. FRIZER tears the dagger from his grasp, and raising it high, strikes him harshly on the head.*)

MARLOWE cries 'Curtain!' and falls back in death. They stare at him lying there.

At that moment three loud knocks sound on the door R. SKERES, who has come forward to help in the fighting, rushes back to hear the loud voice of the innkeeper.)

BULL. The reckoning!

(The murderers stand as if stricken, while MARLOWE lies finally still.)

It is the reckoning.

(SKERES holds the door.)

POLEY. Yes—yes, good woman. Wait. Wait awhile, I prithee. We will come to you. It is the reckoning. (*Bends over.*) He is dead.

FRIZER. Cover his face.

(POLEY covers it with MARLOWE'S cloak.)

SKERES. She is gone.

POLEY. It was necessary. And he said that he could not die. That he never could die.

SKERES. I had no part in this. My sword is bloodless.

POLEY. Bully Skeres, he said.

(SKERES sheathes his sword.)

SKERES. My hand is not guilty of that poet's blood.

FRIZER. He seized my dagger.

SKERES. You struck him.

FRIZER. He brought his death upon himself. I had no wish to slay.

POLEY (*firmlly*). Have done with this weakness. And no recrimination amongst us at any time. Or we are lost.

FRIZER. The axe and the hangman.

POLEY (*triumphantly*). We will cheat them, brave hearts. But we must swear oaths to keep silence. I have a plan. I have met violent and sudden death before. He quarrelled over the wine. We called him atheist. He was angered.

SKERES. Ay, and 'tis true. Did not he deny God and defame Christ?

POLEY. He drew your dagger, Ingram, intending violence against me.

FRIZER. As he did. It all is true as you say. Poley, you are a masterful man.

POLEY. And in the fight with all of us. . . .

SKERES. I held aloof.

POLEY (*emphatically*). With *all* of us—we'll not be at your mercy, Nicholas Skeres!—he was by an accident wounded in the head and he died, crying against God.

FRIZER. That tale will do.

SKERES. It is dangerous.

POLEY. Here is my sword. Nay, you shall swear on your swords, as I will swear on mine. That tale of the death of Marlowe is the true tale as we must faithfully bear witness, each to the others. Swear on your sword, Nicholas. You shall be the first.

SKERES (*kissing his sword*). I swear. The poet died from an accident brought by his own folly and violence; and in the garden he had been talking to me with murders in his thoughts.

POLEY. True. Now, Ingram!

FRIZER (*kissing the hilt of his sword*). I swear that the poet, Kit Marlowe, my friend and guest at this feasting, died of an accident in a drunken brawl, after he had boasted of his triumphs among women—

POLEY. Excellent! A pretty touch, and truthful in its appearance.

FRIZER. And had laughed scorn at the nonsense as he called it of God. He was an atheist.

POLEY. You are a pretty hater, Frizer, for all your power of friendship. Power! What was it that he said—a little while ago? And now I swear by the cross of this, my sword, in the name of the Holiest, that Marlowe died by accident after six on this evening at the hand of Ingram Frizer who was forced to it in self-defence.

FRIZER. That is true. In self-defence.

POLEY. And now to go, all of us, speedily to tell the Watch and Master Danby, the coroner, of this most sad tragedy.

SKERES. 'Tis sad enough in truth. Death is an almighty worm.

FRIZER. But the reckoning must be paid.

POLEY. It is paid. Yes; he quarrelled over the reckoning. Remove that bench, Nick.

(SKERES removes it from before the door.)

Let us go now, the garden way, and climb the wall. It is necessary that we should not disturb the good woman and our grey friend, the tapster, until we have told our tale of this unhappy accident to the coroner and jury at the inquest. And, remember, out of this blood has come our deliverance. The Lords of the Privy Council may serve their warrant of arrest on—that; but the voice of this accuser will never again be eloquent.

(They take their cloaks and other possessions and Exeunt by the garden-door. POLEY, the last to go, takes one look at the shrouded form of MARLOWE on the settle and then smiles and goes, closing the door after him.)

There is a brief pause. Then three knocks again are sounded on the door R. A pause. The tapster enters, followed by ELEANOR BULL.)

BULL. They have gone.

JENKIN. And the reckoning not paid.

BULL. The pasty is not touched. Rogues and coystrels! To slip away like guilty shadows. And now, Daniel Jenkin, what of your poet?

JENKIN. He is here, good mistress. *(He puts back the covering from the face of MARLOWE.)* Dead. Here lies greatness. The world now will put on sorrow. A king of men. 'Tis a very pretty body of mankind gone.

BULL. Methinks, after all, 'twas only a drabbing and a drinking body, like every man of flesh.

JENKIN. Nay, mistress. There lies a star. A glory has fallen from the skies. Kit Marlin has begun his life of dust, and the world will shed its tears. A disaster has come to us. A pride of mankind has fallen to the misery of nothing. All English hearts should be sad for this day. We can mourn the erasure of a star. There is no more sky. His song is ended. It is a new darkness for many of us. *(He covers the face of MARLOWE.)*

(The church clock strikes seven, as the scene slowly closes.)

CURTAIN.

THE EDUCATION OF THE EDUCATOR.

BY GEORGE SMITH.

ORIGINALLY, I was in favour of calling this paper 'The Conduct of Life' or 'The Dyer's Hand.' As a blameless and colourless alternative, I also thought of 'Considerations by the Way.' But on reflection these titles proved respectively too presumptuous, or too vivid, or too milk-and-watery, and the choice fell on 'The Education of the Educator'—a cheap jingle, I think—as a suitable invocation to call schoolmasters into a circle.

There is one thing that I fear I can confidently predict about this paper. It will assert nothing, propose nothing, and prove nothing. There are doubtless general principles in education, but the only general principle that is certain is that all individuals are exceptions. No man can be a schoolmaster for many years without learning this from his own observation, and without having it amply confirmed by the observation of multitudes of parents—especially mothers.

There is one aspect of the subject with which I do not intend to deal, namely, the preliminary professional education of the schoolmaster. The questions that arise on that topic are important and interesting. Should the schoolmaster be trained professionally? Should he make a preliminary study of the philosophy of education, of the psychology of the learner and of himself, of the methods of imparting knowledge and awakening interest? If so, under what conditions and at what stage in his education should this training come? How much advantage may be expected of it and what dangers may be feared? These are interesting and important questions. But they are not our present concern. We are for the moment interested in ourselves: and so far as preliminary education is concerned, the matter is settled *for us* one way or the other. Some of us are now past praying for. We have become, each in his sphere and his degree, teachers by the grace of God or through the long-suffering of our fellow-men. We have been, in some rough-and-ready way, minted, coined and passed current in the educational world, and all we can do now is to try

and make the best of it and humbly to endeavour to do as little harm as possible till the wiser youths are ready to take our place.

But it is a commonplace of Speech Day oratory that true education only begins after we have left school, and that if we take from school—I quote from memory—‘a vigorous personality, high ideals and awakened interests, in fact *mens sana in corpore sano* (cheers) with esprit de corps, we shall be well equipped for pursuing our real education in the adult world.’ So too it may be that the true education of the educator is his adult education and only begins after he has begun to teach: and it is with that thought in my mind that I venture to start a few questions on the subject.

There are, I think, two main tendencies visible in the advice that is generally offered us. The first emphasises the principle that a good schoolmaster must to begin with be a good man. This maxim underlines the word ‘*man*’ and gives to the word ‘good’ the fullest connotation of which it is capable. A good man in this context means not merely one who has a good will and tries to do his duty. That is an empty and abstract conception. He must also be a man of full and many-sided interests, of wide and daring experience, a man of affairs, a politician, a lover of the arts. Little they know of schoolmastering who are nothing but schoolmasters. A schoolmaster’s best education therefore will consist in making and keeping the scope of his interests as ample as possible, in order that his pupils’ growth may not be stunted by coming into contact with a narrow starveling professional personality which is out of touch with the great questions and the eternal values of life.

This view was once, I think, strongly urged by Mr. Wells, with his customary vivacity and scorn of stupidity: he was, after his manner, contemptuous of the commonplace and conventional, incredulous of the value of tradition and careless of continuity, eager for bold measures and bold thinkers who should think the truth as he did, and apprehensive of the results of the technical trivialities and general pedagogic anæmia which was paralysing our well-meant efforts. He called us, if I remember rightly, to come out of our narrow circle: to cease to be teachers and learn to be men—full-blooded men with all the characteristic symptoms of a confident intellectualism, a revolutionary ardour and an untrammelled joy in life. He seemed to deprecate even the inhibiting influence of the Decalogue. Only when we knew what life was—which by hypothesis we did not—life with its problems, its

experiments, its desires, its failures and its faults—only then should we be able to communicate that knowledge, or at least to infect our pupils with the living, questing spirit of exploring and experimenting manhood.

It was a striking indictment of our practice, and even an alluring invitation to a more parti-coloured experience than we had been seeking. We had not seen our office in this brilliant light before, and we hung our heads with shame to think how many years it was since we had heard the chimes at midnight, and how grievously we had neglected our duty by being so accursedly respectable. We wanted to assert our originality and our freedom. For two pence we should have been prepared to take a ticket for the Coliseum, the wildest frolic that our starved æsthetic taste could imagine, or to join the Fabian Society, the most daring act of intellectual emancipation that we had ever dreamt of.

I probably exaggerate: but the memory of the episode is still vivid. And there is no doubt that, however crudely I have put it, there is here a thing worth thinking of. Are we in danger, we schoolmasters, of letting ourselves become too narrowly professional in our interests and our activities? And do our pupils suffer thereby in their education? I can ask the question, but I do not know the answer. I can only suggest a few angles from which the problem may be regarded.

First, this demand for all-round experience and all-round interest on the part of the schoolmaster seems to assume several premisses which are not proved. It assumes that education will mainly proceed by the method of contagious communication of spirit with spirit. The pupil, it is assumed, will unconsciously, in the free development and exercise of his powers, shape himself in manner and spirit on the pattern of his master. If the master has an impulsive zeal for truth, and a free and generous conception of life, so will the pupil. Part of that we all believe strongly, but part of it we doubt and we do not think it is all the truth. We are not sure that the spirit of the superior will inevitably impose its impress by suggestion on the spirit of the subordinate companion. There is such a thing as contra-suggestion or cussedness, and I can fancy, indeed I have seen, a not unintelligent fellow being put off by the spectacle and constant companionship of one who is full of zeal for all things, unwearied in mental activity, alive and awake at every pore and sense. He can't keep up with it. It is too dæmonic, therefore depressing. He would prefer

something less complicated. The honesty of Aristides was not contagious to the Greeks, they being built otherwise. It is not therefore certain that the all-round man will appeal to boys convincingly and attractively. If the possibility of contra-suggestion is as strong as we may reasonably fear, perhaps we schoolmasters do more good unconsciously by being, as we are, restricted in interest, limited, narrow, conventional. That will act by contra-suggestion on our pupils. They will rebel and revolt, which is the correct attitude for youth, and ask for freedom. Perhaps our geniuses, whom the school system is supposed to crush, our original men such as Shelley and Mr. Wells, owe much of their free and vigorous life to the inevitable psychological opposition set up in them by their compulsory familiarity with the petty aims, the hidebound methods, the mechanical activity of their schoolmasters. This is far from being a conclusive argument, but it is at least a comforting thought to those of us who are unfitted for the larger life.

And indeed the larger life, the all-round life, makes nowadays demands on vitality that seem superhuman. To be interested in *all* of it perhaps implies that we don't know *any* of it. Life is complex nowadays—all the aspects of it are so consciously intertwined with one another that the really conscientious man is in danger of doing nothing while he meditates on which is the right thing to do. Perhaps we should not, in our thoughtlessness, scoff at the bricklayer who is not putting his whole heart into his work. Would he be right in so doing? Would that not be selling his soul for a weekly wage, and confining to a purely economic operation the full manhood which is at once his birthright and his duty? It may be that the conscientious fellow is all the time wrestling with larger problems than that of merely laying brick to brick, it may be the problem of the responsibility of the community for the housing of the people, the distribution of that responsibility between state and municipality and individual, the industrial significance of building rings, the economic interdependence of all parts of the universe, the moral influence of material environment, the æsthetic value of line and contour and colour, the congestion of traffic, and the revision of the prayer-book. Fifty years ago we should not have expected him to think deeply on these things. Now we do. And they are all, it must be noted, things of real human interest, and if he neglects them he is, to that extent, it seems, neglecting his full human development and his full develop-

ment as a citizen : but meanwhile the bricks do not get laid, and his case presents at least some points of analogy to that of those headmasters of whom a discontented and pungent writer once said that they were thinking of their pupils' moral development when they ought to have been making up time-tables.

It is illuminating to contrast the life of the schoolmaster nowadays with that of one eighty years ago. When we read the life of the great Arnold we are left with a broad general sense of the simplicity of life in these earlier years. There were indeed a few large problems of policy and method to tackle, the development of the prefect system, the very partial widening of the curriculum, and the moral study of history. But even within the school sphere the practical problems were easily stated and could be solved by some broad movement or could be left alone without reproach. We hear practically nothing of organised study of music or art, of physical training, of manual work, of organised games, of scientific societies, of study of the drama, of sanitation, of hygienic conditions, of classroom lighting, ventilation and equipment, of Empire Leagues or of any of the great movements to which it is now thought necessary to introduce our boys. Schoolmasters were untouched as yet by the problem of state-education and the part that the Public Schools should play in it. Schedules, returns, questionnaires, conferences, committees, reports—all that loitering gear that seems so indispensable to the public servant of to-day was practically unthought of. There were no School Missions, no O.T.C.'s, no County Councils and no Inspectors. A parent had no rights and a Governing Body was a very little thing. Please observe that I am not praising this state of affairs, and I am far from blaming it. As Victor Hugo says after he has made some peculiarly unreliable statements about the past—'*nous sommes historien, et non critique.*' I only want to note that Arnold in his day was sometimes blamed for taking a public interest in the great questions of his time. He was counted a man of wide interest, and yet we feel that his interests were to the clamouring complex interests of modern days as moonlight unto sunlight and as prison fare to haggis. Now haggis is a nutritious food for those who are hereditarily equipped to encounter it, but they are of the elect ; and many of us find it safer to recognise our limitations and not embark on that great and manifold adventure.

I would suggest then as our second consideration, calculated to cool our response to the challenge of a larger life for schoolmasters,

that many of us find the little life we lead large enough for our faculties and that, if we try to grow a real, or to cultivate an adventurous and feigned, many-sidedness, we may overreach ourselves and dissipate vainly in many directions a limited power which might effectively have been directed in one channel.

There is one more aspect of the question that may profitably be mentioned. We have found that the many-sided personality may possibly not be educationally potent by suggestion. We have found that for some of us at any rate it is too complex to be practicable. Now I suggest that it is possibly not the proper ideal for man at all. It seems to be a selfish ideal. It looks like our old Platonic friend, *πολυπραγμοσύνη*, 'meddling with many things,' doing everything it pleases, because it pleases, and because it finds in itself the possibility and the desire of doing everything. Over against it stands the Platonic ideal of Justice, which is to do your own work, an essentially limited work, producing apparently an essentially one-sided person. I know that there are objections to this view of man's duty. It may be maintained that this theory is bound to cripple and maim a man's manhood. If he is to do only what he is naturally best fitted to do, then you will have at once a justification of slavery. Society will become a stubborn hierarchy where most men are only a means to an end and not ends in themselves. The world will become safe from democracy; and the whole effort of modern organised society will have to be changed and the whole machinery to be scrapped.

There is much truth in such a criticism: but there are also in the theory criticised some elements of value. It suggests that service and not individual self-development is the standard of duty. It suggests that service not merely is the only attainable self-development, but, in some way that transcends our intellectual philosophies, may prove to be the highest and the fullest ideal development. It suggests that service always means apparent sacrifice, doing without, refraining, refusing. *Entbehren sollst du, sollst entbehren*. We cannot be at one and the same time a Bernard Shaw and a Georges Carpentier. To be the one well, we must sacrifice the other. And possibly the higher personality may ultimately be found to be his who sacrificed most. It is all a question of balance, of proportion, of fitness to the individual personality. Some schoolmasters will make themselves more valuable by cultivating width of interest, some by ruthless concentration on their own work. This is a mean and beggarly con-

clusion, but I cannot find a better. The only universal maxim in education is that there are no universal maxims in education, and the value of any advice will always lie in the practical application thereof.

Personally I cannot but remember that the man from whom in my school-days I learnt most that was of value in school learning was not a man of many-sided interests. He was a classical scholar, deeply appreciative of literary beauty, and grimly accurate in logic—a schoolmaster first, second and all the time. He believed in God : and he gave himself in service to his boys. He conceived that service clearly, definitely, restrictedly, and he did it, as I still think, marvellously well. I cannot help thinking that the service he seemed to be rendering in a restricted field, overflowed the bounds of his actual and conscious activity, gave us a pattern attitude and spirit for all human questions, grew into an ideal of accuracy and sympathy and patience and humility that was more truly and efficiently educative than a premature and vague introduction to wider interests would have been. That reminiscence proves little or nothing, I know. It is only a datum which would need a wiser thinker than I am to evaluate. But it is not without significance. It at least testifies to the piety which such a man can inspire ; many of us probably have some similar memory and thank God for it, as I do.

I have now dealt with the first general advice that is offered from the outside public to schoolmasters on the subject of their further education. It was that we should make it our aim to free ourselves from the trammels of professionalism and study to be men and citizens in the fullest sense of the word. The second stream of advice makes in the opposite direction. We are told that we tend to be amateur, treating our business as something which can be done mechanically by methods that should long have been obsolete, and that if we would make ourselves indispensable to the community, we must treat our business as our business and try to learn it. Our leisure time, which is spacious, should not be given to politics or art or literature, as the 'Larger-lifers' tell us, but should be turned to probing more deeply the problems of our profession, studying methods, exploring avenues of co-ordination and correlation (blessed words !), keeping ourselves abreast of the latest discoveries in psychology and the latest demands of the Parents' Association.

There is much to be said for this. But there are just a few

things that may be mentioned by way of adverse comment. For one thing, we find, many of us, that a wise or indolent acquiescence in the current ways, tempered by tact in interpretation, often seems to keep us intermittently abreast of the latest novelties. The silk hat which I bought for my wedding has been in fashion three times in the last thirty years. The course of progress does not seem to be in a straight line. It catches us up and passes us, swings round to left or right, doubles and catches us up again. Heuristic method, direct method, co-ordination of subjects, self-government, Dalton plan—they all swim into our ken, are hailed as solar luminaries, and after much talking and polemical discussion do not indeed sputter out but get recognised for what they are, useful but subordinate lights in the firmament.

I do not mean to suggest that the study of these novelties should be avoided by all or any of us, or that we should wrap ourselves in the consciousness of our own efficiency—the one thing of which we are certain in a world of educational flux—and let the mob wrangle about theories. I only feel that there are many schoolmasters who practised all these methods as M. Jourdain wrote prose. They had already by experience found in what proportion *they* could with advantage employ methods of discovery and systems of co-ordination and could trust to individual moral responsibility and individual intellectual curiosity and initiative. For the use of a method will always be conditioned by the personality of the man, and there is more than a probability that there are many ineffective lessons given on the Direct Method by masters with no conversational gifts who could effectively have taught the elements of grammar. Let us be humble. Many of us have our limitations. Many of us are even conscious of them. If there are any such among those whom I address, I would suggest that, unless they feel a compelling call to innovate, to speculate, to go deeply and carefully into the novel theories, it may be most economical of their power and vitality not to take them too seriously, not to assume that each new emphasis of some one aspect of truth, however justifiable and timely it may be, involves the jettison of all our traditional beliefs, the overhauling and perhaps the scrapping of the whole antiquated machine. We shall read about all such theories of course in an intelligent but semi-detached spirit, trace their rise and progress, and watch the tumults of our professional brethren as they surge around now this flag and now that, crying 'Here is truth' or 'Here.' And we shall, after the manner

and the measure of the Apine bee, extract from each—half consciously, half unconsciously—that portion of its goodness that we can assimilate to our personality and our practice. 'I have known four-and-twenty leaders of revolt.'

This advice is only directed to the address of those to whom it is applicable. There are others—perhaps many—whose best work in education will lie just exactly in stating their theories, elaborating them, and fighting for them. By doing this they will serve to give the great mass of us—the traditionalists, the commonplace people—that series of shocks and stimulus which may prevent us from becoming too satisfied with our traditions, and may tend to make us in some degree conscious artists where before we had been mechanical artisans. And we must not, I think, take any pleasure in the cheap gibe that educational theorists are teachers who have failed. It is not always true: and sometimes, when it is, it only implies that their gifts are other, it may be higher, than those of the working schoolmaster. We do not throw it in a great architect's teeth that he would be a failure as a plumber or a bricklayer.

There is only one method of professional activity of which I have the gravest doubts. I suspect that of all the modern developments in the work of education, the most doubtful and dangerous and sometimes pernicious is the formation of educational societies and the practice of haunting conferences. That is, I dare say, an over-statement, which you will forgive and discount. It was wrung from me by the stress of a temporary emotion. But there are times, are there not? when one feels that there are too many of these and that they are too active and that they make demands on our interest which either dissipate our energy if we accede to them or tacitly reprove us if we don't. Take the case of an ordinary unprotected classical scholar. Plainly he must join the Classical Association or feel that he has neglected his duty. But he is *ex hypothesi* in sympathy with the humanities in general: therefore he will also join the English Association and the Historical Association and, just to show that there is no ill-feeling and to assert his solidarity with all humanists, however humble, the Modern Language Association. His interests, however, are, again *ex hypothesi*, wider than the mere school age, therefore he gives support also to the Workers' Educational Association. But he would fain mark likewise his openness to new ideas and so he is bound to join the Society for Educational Experiment, or if he is of a milder and more domestic nature, the P.N.E.U.: and by the time

that he has joined a few of these he finds himself only at the beginning of a wide-ranging, popular and prodigal career. Meanwhile we have forgotten his Trade Unions, I.A.H.M. and I.A.A.M. which will, if he takes even the slightest practical part in their deliberations, clap him on to committees and send him as a delegate to other unions and conferences and coalitions. Have I exaggerated? I hardly think so. Indeed when I consider the temptations of this kind by which the eager and conscientious schoolmaster is hourly beset, and when I remember with deep thankfulness that so far I only belong to two Unions, six Associations and a handful of Guilds, Conferences, and Societies, I can only echo with humble pride the words of Clive: 'By God, gentlemen, I stand astonished at my own moderation.'

But in all seriousness, is not the individual vitality in danger of being crushed amid all this complex machinery? Do we not waste our time and other people's time unnecessarily? Do we not say many things that we never intended to say and listen to many things that need not have been said? Are we educating ourselves by this means, or are we deceiving ourselves? I do not know. I come back to the old comforting conclusion that it takes all sorts to make a world and there are probably some men who can develop their personality best when they surrender some of it and become factors in a more complex expression.

There is indeed one method of continuing and completing our education which I would heartily and unreservedly commend. It has only one disadvantage—that it is impossible. I refer to the system of rotation of professional activities from assistant master to head master and inspector and administrator and back again. Such varied experience as this would give us fuller understanding and warmer sympathies. But alas! the tracks all lead one way. '*Facilis descensus Averni*'—there are advertisements for head masters in nearly every number of the educational papers: '*noctes atque dies patet atri janua ditis*'—open to all who are under 40: '*sed revocare gradum*'—but few people want an assistant master who has once been a head: and I am bound to say in candour that few head masters seem to know their own interests and to try to become assistant masters once more. Possibly finance has something to do with it.

And yet think of the disabilities to which a head master is subject. He controls an organisation, but gets out of touch with the individual. He becomes autocratic and is generally grievously

misunderstood. He is solitary and must fly to conferences for company. He is a public character and must on public platforms say the kind of thing that public speakers say. He becomes a master of the sounding commonplace. He tells general audiences that 'after all, the one aim of education is the making of character' or that 'education is a spiritual atmosphere, not an application of mechanical methods.' He used to talk about the fortifying discipline of the classics and now, if his audience prefer, he pleads for a 'fuller, richer and more sympathetic knowledge of contemporary relations, a knowledge only to be gained by a living study of the living languages'—'which' he adds in his droll original fashion 'have too long been the Cinderella of the curriculum,' or finally he would venture to put in a plea (we almost always put it that way when we are sure of a majority) for the study of English which is strangely neglected in our Public Schools. '*La sincérité souffre un peu au métier que je fais.*'

Perhaps I am mixing him up a little with the intelligent parent. But anyhow I feel sure that he would sometimes gladly admit his fallibility if his position would let him, and start afresh with chastened spirit to teach a little now that he has learned a lot. But life is too short, and the flesh is weak and the salary is too small. And his dream of some day again teaching, teaching, teaching all during his working hours never gets realised.

And now that I have come to an end of this irresponsible, retrograde and obscurantist paper, you may ask me what conclusions have I reached about the further education of the educator. Absolutely none, except the beggarly conclusion that there are innumerable ways in which it can be pursued, and every single one of them is right for somebody. If I have seemed to scoff at any of them, it was ill done on my part. For I have an enormous belief in the educability along any line of anyone who wants to be educated.

THE COUNTER-EXPEDITION.

BY LAURENCE HALLIDAY.

As Jim Blake came round the corner of one of those wonderful old streets of Sonsonate, in the republic of El Salvador, somebody stabbed him with a knife, and he fainted.

As he was losing consciousness, it seemed to him that the row of squat white houses shot up into the air till they towered over him; they peered down at him with great barred windows like solemn eyes. And the crowd that ran towards him became a mob of elongated giants, whose heads, topped with high-crowned, yellow sombreros, whisked up into space, so that he could see nothing but feet—bare scaly brown feet, feet in dusty sandals, and feet with dirty, broken nails. And a little man in a black alpaca suit who, knife in hand, had been leaning back against a wall and staring at him with startled eyes, he, too, grew monstrously tall all in a moment; and when Blake tried to gaze up after him, something snapped in his brain.

Blackness descended upon him with a noise like thunder. It fell over his head like a sack; it shut out the babel of the crowd and the sudden shrill voice of the little man in black alpaca; it muffled the cry that sprang to his lips and suffocated him as if with heavy folds. He struggled, but he could no longer retain his reeling senses.

He found himself lying in an ancient wooden bed of vast dimensions, in a room that was huge and bare, with great barred windows that reached down to the stone floor, arched doorways large enough to admit a horse and carriage, and massive beams that supported a roof of red pantiles. To the left rose stout plastered pillars, and beyond them he caught a glimpse of a patio filled with green hanging creepers and palms.

In the centre of the room was a cluster of people. A spectacled doctor; an elderly lady with her back turned; a tall, stately young woman with the imperious face of a queen; a military

person with revolvers strapped to his waist; three under-sized men carrying guns and dressed in shabby uniforms; and in the midst of them, explaining something with sweeping and rhythmic gestures, the little man of the black alpaca suit.

The explanations were never-ending and conducted in a shrill and impassioned monotone; the interruptions were countless. The military person would break in with short, breathless remarks like indrawn sighs, concluding each with a simultaneous uplifting of eyebrows, shoulders, and hands. The elderly lady emitted a continuous stream of observations in a deep bass voice. The stately young lady confined herself to curt, contemptuous sentences, which she addressed indifferently to the military person, the short man, the stout lady, or the three under-sized men in uniforms.

'Say,' said Blake, suddenly. 'What am I doing here?'

Instantly, there was silence. Eight pairs of eyes were turned on him. The little man in the black alpaca suit moved forward with a sudden jerk that suggested acceleration from the rear.

'Jesús Vincente de Castillo y Lara, at your orders,' said the small man, bowing.

'Jim Blake, your servant,' said Blake, and lapsed weakly into English. 'What made you stick that knife into me?'

Strangely enough, he felt no real anger towards the small man; overwhelming curiosity devoured him.

'Why stab *me*? ' asked Blake.

'A great mistake has occurred!' cried the little man, in Spanish. 'It has been my infinite misfortune to mistake you for a cursed Jew who shot my brother fifteen years ago. I cannot explain more. To tell you—believe me, stranger, I had no intention—'

'You stabbed me in mistake for someone else!' echoed Blake, in a dazed voice.

'It was so sudden. You have red hair, like the Jew. And his great height and breadth. If I could tell you how desolated I am—'

He broke off, waving agitated hands in the air, fixing appealing eyes on Blake.

'Continue, papa,' said the young woman in a cold voice.

'But continue what?' asked the little man, turning angrily to her. 'Of a truth I have said all I can say. *De veras y por Dios Santo que si!* This gringo, he does not understand one word

of what I am saying to him. How shall he gather the manner in which this cursed mistake has come to pass ?'

'Have you no pride, papa ?' demanded the young woman, in icy tones. 'Will you suffer that this foreigner regard you as a common cut-throat ? Will you——'

Blake roused himself.

'I understand you, Señor Castillo,' he interrupted, in Spanish ; for men, no matter what has come between them, must stand together to face the common foe. 'The young lady exaggerates. This matter is of no importance. I understand you perfectly. You have stabbed me by mistake, no ? Such a thing as any man might do !'

He paused, and drew afresh upon memories of 'Speak Spanish Like a Native in Three Months.'

'I supplicate you do not mortify yourself,' continued Blake, elegantly but jerkily, for each breath cost him a pang beneath the left armpit. 'There is not of what. Completely. Therefore say no more.'

'A burden of anxiety you have lifted from my soul !' cried the little man, poetically. 'A million thanks I offer you for your magnanimity ! Although it is impossible to undo the evil my hastiness has wrought, I can at least attempt to make such poor amends as lie in my power. Permit me to introduce my wife.'

The stout lady came forward. She was, thought Blake, certainly but poor amends ; yet he extended his hand to her. She took it, retained it for some time in a limp grasp, and murmured what seemed to be a small prayer over it.

'My daughter,' said the Señor Castillo, indicating the scornful young woman. Blake gazed up into her clear brown eyes. He would have heaved a sigh, had it not been for the wound in his side. He felt it was worth being stabbed for an introduction to her.

'Señor Alfonso Boludo.'

The military person bowed deeply.

'Don Alfonso is the Chief of Police in Sonsonate,' explained the small man. 'Through his kind consent I am enabled to see you brought safely to my house. Now that that is done, I must regretfully leave you and accompany him to a place of temporary confinement.'

'It has been an honour to waive my duty for a few hours,' said the Chief of Police, with courteous gestures. 'This unfortunate

mistake distresses me as much as it does the Señor Castillo. I only wish you had been the cursed Jew for whom he mistook you.'

'I, too, am distressed by this,' said Blake, not to be outdone in politeness. 'I regret that the Señor Castillo wasted so good a knife-thrust upon me. I wish I had been the Jew.'

'Then we find ourselves in a similar frame of mind,' observed the Chief of Police, as one who would convey a delicate compliment.

There was silence for a few minutes. A parrot chattered out in the sun-baked patio. The stout lady wiped her eyes and heaved a quivering sigh. Then the little man drew himself up heroically.

'I leave you in charge of my wife and daughter,' he said. 'May your recovery be quick, and your subsequent convalescence long and pleasant! My house is yours, and anything you may desire.'

He turned to the Chief of Police.

'Señor Boludo, do your duty.'

A sharp word of command to the three ragged gendarmes, a shouldering of arms and tramping of feet, and the Señor Jesús Vicente de Castillo y Lara was led away to the jail, leaving Jim Blake in possession of his home.

Jim Blake spent six weeks convalescing in that house, and they were six of the most pleasant weeks of his life. He learnt to speak Spanish as it is spoken in Spanish America. He smoked two hundred and fifty of the Señor Castillo's best cigars. He acquired a taste for dishes violently flavoured with chilli. He ate beans like a native.

For diversion, he spent hours stretched in a hammock in the patio, gazing pensively upon the countenance of Esmeralda, the fair and scornful daughter of the Señor Castillo. There was, he found, a singular pleasure to be drawn from the mere contemplation of womanly beauty—a pleasure in accordance with the languor caused by the loss of blood from his wound. It is true that after some three weeks he felt a desire to address polite and complimentary remarks to her; but apart from this ambition, he could always find pleasure and recreation in the act of gazing upon her.

A sad condition for a bachelor! But this was tropical America; there was romance in the stillness of the sun-filled patio; in the tinkling of far-off guitars, floating from without on the wings of warm soft breezes; and in the dreamy waving of the heavy-headed

palms. And the starry nights, fragrant with the scent of giant flowers!

Conversation with the alluring young woman was a failure, however. Her replies were short and coldly polite. Also, she answered him in English, which annoyed him. Spanish is the more romantic language. So he turned to the stout Señora Castillo for company; she was a cheery soul, if devoid of intellect.

'You are a merchant, señor?' she asked him.

'I am a traveller,' he replied. 'An analytical chemist on vacation. A desire to learn more of your beautiful language has brought me here.'

But he lied, and knew it. There lurked in him a desire for adventure, and it was that which had sent him wandering.

From the old lady he learnt that the Castillo family was not Salvadoreñan, but Mexican.

'I have always had desires to visit your delightful country,' remarked Blake, with appropriate politeness. 'Were I not at present enjoying a visit to your house, I would wish to be in Mexico.'

'And why do you wish to visit our country, Señor Blek?' asked the old lady, with gentle curiosity.

Blake gazed pensively at the queenly profile of Esmeralda; at the delicate aquiline nose and proud nostrils; at the rounded, firm chin; at the upright, slender neck; and at the shining black hair, topped by a spreading tortoise-shell comb.

'It is the women of your country,' said Blake sighing. 'They are famous for their beauty. I know it now.'

'*Válgame Dios!*' cried the Señora Castillo, delighted. 'I am too old a woman that you pay me such compliments!'

'Ever since I landed in El Salvador,' continued Blake, 'I have been trying to think how I might enter Mexico. But it is impossible, now that the country is in such a state of upheaval.'

'*Ay, Dios mio, yes!*' sighed the old lady. 'There is war and killing in Mexico now; it is not healthy for foreigners. This De la Huerta strives to throw out Obregon, as Obregon threw out Carranza before. Thus it has always been, in our country. When a Mexican gentleman's revolutionary adventures come to a successful end and he enters into power, it at once becomes evident to the public that he is undesirable, and another is found to rise up against him.'

'He will win, this De la Huerta?'

'So they say,' said the old lady, fumbling nervously with her

embroidery-work. 'Obregon is not wanted, I hear; nor he who is to follow. There is talk of *garbanzos*——'

'The political affairs of Mexico will not interest Mr. Blake,' interrupted the daughter, suddenly; her mother rose and left the patio.

'Señorita,' said Blake, 'I fear you resent my presence in this house. I am unwelcome. I will go.'

'Don't do that,' said Esmeralda, coldly, in English. 'My father has made you a terrible injury. It is an honour that we compensate you with humble hospitality.'

And she left him.

He lay there, a friendly, muttering parrakeet scaling the lofty heights of his shoulder; he mused on the adventure that had thrown him into such company.

'This is only the beginning,' said Blake to himself. 'There's more to come.'

And so it proved.

On the evening of the fifteenth of January, the whole of the household, from the Señora Castillo down to the Tehuana nurse they had brought with them from Mexico, was thrown into a state of excitement by some piece of news that they did not pass on to Blake. Their excitement came to a climax with the entrance into the patio of a tall, handsome, wistful-faced person in white naval uniform, wearing epaulettes lavishly decorated with gold braid. This person introduced himself as the commander of the Mexican warship *Libertad*, and asked for the Señor Castillo.

'He is absent, unavoidably absent,' said the old lady, wringing her hands. 'A terrible accident has necessitated his temporary confinement in the *carcel*. He had been preparing everything for your arrival; indeed, all is ready—nothing but his presence is lacking.'

'You had been expecting me?' exclaimed the Commander, amazed. 'News travels fast, señora! A cablegram from Salina Cruz by way of Guatemala, I suppose?'

'He knew,' said the old lady. 'He knew you would come. He had information of what would occur. You have come from Salina Cruz, no?'

'Yes,' said the Commander. 'We have run from Salina Cruz south with every ounce of steam we could raise. At Champerico and San José we paused; but there are no true Mexicans settled

down there—the sons of dogs have forgotten their country since they left her—and we could get no help. So we hurried on. We had heard that a rich Mexican merchant lived in Sonsonate. Fortune favours us, señora ; for we are in sore need. We have nothing. No food, no fuel-oil, no money. I myself could find but a few centavos with which to pay my fare from Acajutla to this town ; we left hastily, you understand. And, for which reason we are here, we have no arms, no ammunition.'

'Come, Señor Commander,' said Esmeralda, who had been listening with trembling eagerness. 'All is ready. I will show you.'

She opened a door in the far wall of the patio, a door such as only a Spanish dreamer could have lavished on a warehouse, a door pierced with elaborate carving, like a choir-screen. Beyond it was a big, dusty building, filled with bales of merchandise. Esmeralda led the way in ; and Blake, who had not stirred from his hammock, saw her pry open one of a large number of packing-cases labelled 'California Canned Tomato Sauce,' and lift out a rifle for examination.

A great feast was prepared in honour of the Commander, that night. Chickens and turkeys were cooked and served in *mole* ; heaped bowls of tropical fruit adorned the table ; choice wines and spirits were uncorked. The solitary electric bulb was reinforced by a couple of beautiful silver candelabra ; the everyday chairs of cheap red wood, with their hairy seats of untanned ox-hide, were whisked away ; and four venerable chairs dating apparently back to the Spanish Conquest were produced. Blake eyed these chairs curiously ; it seemed to him that they were entitled to an honourable old age in a museum ; he doubted if they were suitable for use, despite their massiveness.

Blake was introduced to the Commander, who subsequently smoked all his cigarettes, having, he explained with a melancholy smile, left his own case behind in Salina Cruz.

The conversation began briskly. The Commander related, with large and dramatic gestures, the horrors of the journey he had just accomplished. Leaving Salina Cruz, a port on the southwest coast of Mexico, without time to prepare for their voyage, they had existed for six days upon a few handfuls of beans and rice, washed down with water. The only member of the party who had possessed any tobacco had been the engineer, a man who

smoked a filthy pipe, a disgraceful Britisher whom they had enrolled in their crew owing to the impossibility of finding anyone else at a moment's notice. Of water there had been little; and that brackish and scarcely drinkable. The *Libertad* had been obliged to hug the coast; and, owing to the swell, they had suffered from the incessant rolling of the ship. Rumour had it that that cursed gunboat, the *San Luis Potosi*, armed with who knew how many guns, was pursuing them——

'The *San Luis Potosi*?' interrupted Esmeralda, in a startled voice.

'Yes, the *San Luis Potosi*!' cried the Commander, throwing clenched fists into the air and rolling his eyes. 'These unmentionable rebels, they captured her in Manzanillo, when she was preparing to bombard that port; and now, seething with these disgraceful bandits, she is sailing south to intercept us and ruin our desperate loyalist venture——'

'*Ay! Madre de Dios!*' shrieked the old lady; for her chair had given way and thrown her backwards into a papaya-tree.

Blake helped her to extricate herself. A papaya had broken over her head, and she appeared quite shaken. She bade them good night in a trembling voice, and went to her bedroom.

Next morning a terrible storm arose throughout the house. The Commander raged up and down the patio, going through all the furious pantomime of Latin gesture. Esmeralda stood calm and defiant, with arms akimbo, head thrown back, and eyes insolently veiled behind drooping black eyelashes. She said no, no, no, a great many times, shrugged her pretty shoulders, and spat with marvellous accuracy into a brass spittoon at least ten feet away. The stout Señora Castillo, the folds of her lacy mantilla clenched in her fists, stood shaking like a jelly.

'You are imbecile, the two of you!' shouted the Commander, raising hands to heaven. 'Our noble republic totters and you lend the hand to aid its fall! Have I to explain everything to you again, women? Cannot you comprehend the situation? Every port connected to the capital by railroad is in the hands of the rebels—Vera Cruz, Tampico, Puerto Mexico, Salina Cruz—all, all, all! Give me the arms and ammunition, a loan of money with which to finance the expedition, and in three days I will raise such an army that this rebel horde will flee from Salina Cruz at

the mere news of it! I have only to run the *Libertad* into Ixastopee in the state of Chiapas, and General Clodomiro, who has been in exile since the year 1910, owing to the failure of his uprising in that year, and who is now reconciled with our government and anxious to help it, will come out of his hiding-place in the *sierras* and call up thousands of men to my aid. With these munitions here in this very house we could overturn this rebel stronghold in—in five minutes. Yet you tell me to wait! Are you mad?’

‘You have been drinking, Commander,’ retorted Esmeralda, calmly. ‘You must know that business is not done thus—’

‘Business, señorita!’ cried the Commander, apparently about to swoon with amazement at her lack of understanding. ‘Business?’ he cried, running a hand through his lank black locks. ‘Are you entirely without comprehension? This is a matter of saving the republic. You talk of business! As for securities, the General Clodomiro would sign them immediately—were he not in hiding at the present moment. Myself, I will sign anything on earth that you wish! But give me these arms.’

‘It is impossible,’ said Esmeralda. ‘Nothing can be done until my father is released. This is a business matter of too great importance for me to handle. You must wait. We hope to make your stay as pleasant as possible; and when my father is released—’

‘And when will that be?’

‘Who knows? There are merchants in this town—Salvador-eñans, you understand—who will be anxious that he stay confined as long as possible. He is Mexican; and there are jealousies, you understand—’

‘And when will your father be released?’

‘Who knows?’ repeated the girl, hiding a faint smile behind her fan. ‘To-day, to-morrow, a month hence.’

‘*Maria Santisima!*’ wailed the Commander. ‘Of what use will this ironmongery be a month hence?’

He scowled at them for a minute.

‘This is a trick, by God!’ he cried. ‘I have fallen into a nest of rebels. You shall pay for this, ladies. We are in El Salvador, it is true; yet you are Mexican. Our government knows well how to reward those that are faithful to it—be sure it has ways of dealing with the unfaithful!’

He paused dramatically, then said:

‘I will leave, this moment, for San Salvador, the capital; our Minister shall be informed of the treatment I had received from

your hands. *Caramba!* I pity you, ladies; life will go hardly with you henceforth.'

His threats did not seem to disturb Esmeralda.

'It pains me that you should come to such a decision,' she said, calmly. 'But remember, Señor Commander, that—should you change your mind—you are welcome here as long as you wish to stay.'

'Stay? I mean it. This moment I go!'

'Go, then,' said Esmeralda.

'I will inform the Minister of what has come to pass here. Make up your mind at once, for I will brook no delay.'

'If you wish to denounce us to the Minister, go,' said Esmeralda, distinctly.

'I will, then!' shouted the Commander. 'I go to pack my baggage this instant!'

He dashed to the door of his room, wrenched it open, and disappeared within.

About a quarter of an hour later, he strolled out again. In his excitement he had overlooked the fact that he had no baggage to pack. He had overlooked other and more important things.

He seemed now more wistful and more melancholy than ever. He wandered about the house like a lost dog, and showed no signs of leaving for the capital. Now and again he would heave a long quivering sigh like an after-sob, sink into a chair, and lose himself in sorrowful meditation. Then he would leap to his feet and recommence his aimless perambulation.

Blake sat in a chair at the other end of the courtyard, embarked upon his two hundred and forty-seventh cigar from the box of the Señor Castillo, and observed the gyrations of the Commander with the comfortable and intelligent expression of one who watches the shooting of a movie play, reflecting that he will not be called on to pay anything for the entertainment.

Finally, wearying of the sight of the distraught Mexican, he closed his eyes, allowed the weed to drop from his nerveless fingers, and lapsed into peaceful slumber.

Just as he had drifted into the middle of a thrilling dream in which the scornful Señorita Esmeralda came to him and told him that she had discovered his guilty secret, that she knew that he had now recovered from his wound and was using their house as an hotel, a sudden noise disturbed him; he woke to a sad spectacle.

The unhappy Commander had thrown himself into a chair; his shoulders heaved jerkily; his arms, extended on a small table before him, writhed like snakes; his feet were twined round the legs of the chair. He was sobbing.

Never before had Blake seen a man cry. It roused in him tremendous and unforeseen emotions. Far from feeling a desire to rise and kick the Commander, as he would have expected, he found himself torn between an instinct to leap to his feet and flee, and an overwhelming inclination to seat himself beside the Commander and add to the volume of his lamentations. It was a weird and unpleasant sensation.

Fortunately neither alternative proved necessary. The door opened; the Señorita Esmeralda strolled languidly across the courtyard, smoking a long black cigarette; and opened the carved entrance to the warehouse. The Commander raised a watery countenance and gazed after her; he gave vent to his surcharged feelings:

‘That noble little crew—starving!’ he said. ‘My republic—waiting! *Ay mi!* What shall I do?’

Esmeralda offered no suggestion. The carved door closed, leaving behind it a slowly ascending puff of blue smoke. Then, from beyond the doorway, there sounded a burst of amused laughter.

This was too much for the Commander. Tears and despondent attitude vanished in an instant; he leapt to his feet and rent the Castillo house with curses.

When a person of Anglo-Saxon blood wishes to relieve his feelings, he has the choice of two classes of swear-words: the profane, and the obscene. The Latin, however, has but one. The profane he ranks as merely exclamatory.

Had there burnt in Blake a true sense of chivalry, he would have leapt to his feet, smitten the Mexican in the mouth, and bidden him either arm himself or desist from unpleasant reflections on his hostess and her ancestors; but he did no such thing. He sat there and rejoiced in the change that had come over the man; there lay concealed in his breast a lively fear that the man might revert to his original lachrymatory performance.

When, at last, the Commander paused, Blake lit his two hundred and forty-eighth cigar and opened a newspaper.

He looked up, a little later, on feeling a light tap on his shoulder; beholding the Commander, wistful and melancholy, standing like

a pale wraith at his side, he mechanically produced his cigarette-case.

But the Commander did not want a cigarette. He had a more difficult request to make, and he made it still more difficult by lowering his shamed voice to a half-whisper.

'Mr. Blek,' he said, with downcast eyes, 'I am humiliated beyond words. That I should have to make such a request from a foreigner. And one who is, moreover, but an acquaintance. But you will understand. You will sympathise. You have heard me narrate of the suddenness with which Salina Cruz fell before the rebels? Of how it became evident to us that we must hastily depart if we were to be of further use to our government? We did so. Without food, water, or money. I encounter myself here without a centavo; and it is imperative that I leave at once for San Salvador, the capital. Mr. Blek, lend me ten pesos.'

'Señor Commander,' replied Blake, politely, 'it is an honour to contribute to the stability of your government.'

He put his hand in his pocket.

'Make it twenty pesos,' said the Commander, hastily.

'I am humiliated beyond words. But I have no more,' replied Blake, still more politely.

The Commander seized the money, muttered thanks, and vanished.

Esmeralda entered the courtyard with a jaunty, almost defiant air; on finding it empty but for Blake, alarm spread over her fair countenance.

'This unfortunate countryman of mine?' she inquired, breathlessly. 'Have you seen him anywhere?'

'He went off to catch the train, five minutes ago,' replied Blake, uncomfortably.

She suppressed a cry, and gazed at him with wide-open eyes.

'But the money? How—*Ay!* Mr. Blake, you lent him money?'

'Yes,' said Blake, wriggling.

Esmeralda then spoke in Spanish.

'Cursed day that you came here, stranger!' she cried, passionately. 'Would that my father's knife had been sharper!'

'Gosh!' exclaimed Blake, springing to his feet. 'What have I done, señorita?'

She gazed at him with flaming eyes.

'Tell me, señorita,' implored Blake. 'What can I do? you've only got to tell me, you know, and I'll do it. Shall I go out after him and drag him back?'

'Could you?' asked Esmeralda, doubtfully. 'Yes, go!' she added, giving him an agitated push. 'Go on after him. Tell him I will treat with him. Tell him—tell him anything.'

Running straight through Sonsonate, as if an earthquake had split the town in half, was a deep ravine, packed with palms and vividly green foliage. Tumbling in cascades over the bottom of the ravine was a little river. A narrow, ancient bridge, thrown like a spider's line across the gulch, connected the two halves of the town. Dodging between slow-moving ox-waggon with high, hoop-shaped covers, Blake caught the Commander half-way across this bridge.

He was not anxious to be overtaken; he cast a scared glance behind him and quickened his step.

'Señor Commander!' cried Blake, clutching the Mexican by the arm. 'The Señorita Esmeralda says she will treat with you.'

The Commander spun round.

'I come,' he said.

'Here is money for your immediate needs,' said Esmeralda, handing the Commander an American bill. 'Get away to your ship in Acajutla at once; there is no time to be lost, I see that now. I will secure ox-carts in which to convey these cases to the port; it would not be well to send them by train; these railroad people are so inquisitive. The customs officials in Acajutla I can answer for personally; but this railroad, it is owned by Americans, and the employees fear neither God nor man.'

'But the loan, señorita, the loan?' said the Commander, impatiently.

'I will speak to Mr. Blake about that,' answered Esmeralda. 'Get gone, at once.'

The Commander hurried from the house. Esmeralda stood gazing after him for a minute, then sighed and turned to Blake.

Gone was the coldness of the clear brown eyes, the proud uplifting of the rounded chin, the scorn of the shapely mouth. She was tender, humble, and troubled. She stole close to Blake, so that his breath caught suddenly, his eyes glowed, and, with the sense of her propinquity, he became temporarily insane. His cigar fell out of his mouth and he did not see it fall.

'Mr. Blake,' she said. 'You have extricated us from a great difficulty. Is it too much that I ask another favour of you?'

'Ask it!' cried Blake, ardently. 'Ask any old thing. Ask——'

She drew gently back.

'There is no other man in the house, now that my father is elsewhere,' said Esmeralda, piteously. 'I have no one to advise me.'

'Let me——' started Blake, taking a step forward.

'It is the question of the loan,' interrupted Esmeralda. 'We are about to lend a huge sum of money to the cause, a great quantity of American bills which my father had ready in the house, anticipating the need of them. But I am only a woman. I distrust myself in these great business matters. I hesitate to hand this money over to the Commander, who is a stranger. Therefore I have suggested to him that I send you with it. You will guard the wallet in your possession, and not hand it over until the General Clodomiro has signed securities agreed upon, and given them to you. The Commander has sworn to find means of conveying you back to El Salvador, afterwards; and I—I know that you are such that you will bring me back these securities, even though you risk your life. You are thus. You will do this thing?'

'Just wait while I get my hat,' said Blake.

The little train rattled over the narrow-gauge line, which wound through sugar-plantations and groves of bananas, to penetrate finally through a strip of matted bush and deposit Blake at the foot of the pier. Acajutla consisted of two or three large houses encircled by verandas, a native village of dusty, palm-thatched hovels, and a long, chocolate-coloured beach, upon which the ocean rollers broke in towering surf.

Anchored a little beyond the head of the pier was the *Libertad*. The Mexican warship was not quite so large as Blake had pictured in his mind. She was, in fact, an ex-mine-sweeper, armed with a minute gun mounted upon a circular platform on her fore-deck.

He found the ship's dinghy tied to the pier; and it was only after twenty minutes' argument and the lavishing of much bakshish that Blake succeeded in persuading the man in charge to take him aboard.

When he boarded the ship, he found the crew of the *Libertad*

seated along the coaming of the engine-room skylight, facing the gangway-head. The Commander had not yet arrived, it seemed; and Blake was not expected. Yet none asked his business, attempted to prevent his boarding the ship, or otherwise molested him; they did not appear to notice him, and when he addressed remarks to them, they fidgeted and turned their apathetic glance uncomfortably away. Reading from left to right, the crew of the *Libertad* consisted of one lieutenant, dressed in soiled whites; one shrivelled, simian person in khaki, rank unknown; four seamen, and a cook. Aloof from them, perched aft on the bulwark, was a dirty-faced man, who was busy fishing with a piece of string and a bent pin.

Finding they would not deign to take notice of him, Blake turned from the torpid row and proceeded aft; he accosted the dirty-faced man, who, he had observed, possessed a pair of pale and troubled eyes, and was evidently not a Mexican.

'Hello!' said Blake, jauntily, as he threw down on the deck the great leather wallet with which Esmeralda had entrusted him, and flung one leg over the bulwark. 'Who are you?'

'Me?' said the dirty-faced man. 'I'm Lord 'Igh Engineer-Admiral of the Pacific, that's oo I am. Oo are you?'

'I'm the Minister of Finance,' said Blake. 'And Almighty Rescuer of Mexico. Tell me again, in condensed language, who are you?'

'Oo am I? I'm a ruddy fool, that's why I'm on this boat,' replied the other, despondently. 'Wot am I? I'm on strike. Eiver I gets my ration of rice *and* beans like the rest of 'em, or else this 'ere ship stays anchored till she rots. Why should that great fat lump'—indicating with an oil-stained thumb the lieutenant in the soiled whites—'get beans when I only get a 'andful of maggoty rice? Would you spend three more blistering days in an engine-room with a temprater of round a 'undred and forty, and that without an oiler or fireman to 'elp you, and up 'alf the night, all on rice? I arsk you!'

'What I meant was: name and nationality,' said Blake.

''Enery 'Awkins, *a sus ordenes*; born in London,' said the engineer, jerking his line suddenly, and then lapsing again into immobility.

'English? I thought all engineers were Scotch?'

'Garn!' said Hawkins. 'Don't insult a noble pefession.'

There was silence for a minute.

'My great-grandfather came from London,' said Blake, in a conversational tone of voice.

'No? Must 'ave left about the same time as me,' observed the engineer.

'You've been in these countries a long time, then? How do you like them?'

'Couldn't tell you,' retorted Henry, smartly. 'I don't.'

'Why do you stay here, then?'

'Carn't get away, now. You carn't, you know, if you stay too long. The 'eat and the booze and the rest of it. You forget to go 'ome, somehow. I came out from England on port-construction work, somewheres in the beginning of last century. I say, 'Arry—if ever one of these 'ere Spanish beauties gives you one of them long-lashed looks, and starts smiling at you sweet-like, don't stop to pick up your 'at. Turn and run.'

But Blake preserved a non-committal expression. Hawkins had never been smiled on by Esmeralda; that was clear.

'No; ain't been 'ome since.'

The little Englishman gave a long trembling sniff. He tugged savagely at the line.

'But wot I ses,' he remarked, in a more cheerful voice, reverting to his previous theme, 'is, do I get my feed of beans or do I not?'

'You do,' said Blake. 'The Commander has just negotiated a loan, up in Sonsonate.'

'You don't say so!' cried the engineer, nearly dropping his line, and a look of joyous anticipation spreading over his face. 'Lummy! I never thought 'e would do it! 'E got nothing in Champerico but a first-clars drunk; and in San José 'e was gone three days, and when 'e come back 'e was nearly orf 'is 'ead—said 'e 'adn't 'ad a meal since 'e left the ship, and why the blyzes 'adn't wesomefin better to offer 'im than beans. Blimy! I never thought 'e'd do it!'

A quarter of an hour later, the Commander reached the ship. He strode across the deck, and said to Hawkins:

'Chief of Engines, you will start heating up your machine at once. Shortly we go.'

'No bloomin' fear!' said the Engineer-Admiral. 'I want my beans first.'

'Speak to me in Castilian,' said the Commander, sharply. 'You know I do not understand your language.'

'I am unable to work, owing that there is nothing in my interior,' said Hawkins, in Spanish. 'I request beans.'

'A meal will be sent to you. I myself will speak to the cook. But start heating your engines.'

'Right you are, old top,' said Henry, cheerfully. 'And if I don't get them beans, I'll 'eat the old bus up till she fuses solid!'

He disappeared below; loud hisses of steam followed as he blew the water out of his cold cylinders.

Several ox-waggon's arrived at the foot of the pier. They were laden with packing-cases labelled 'California Canned Tomato Sauce.' In charge of them was Esmeralda herself.

There was some difficulty about getting them aboard. The pier and the lighters were owned by the railroad company, which did not care to handle consignments the contents of which were suspected of being incorrectly stated. So they were reduced to bringing the cases aboard one at a time in the dinghy.

The first case to reach the deck of the *Libertad* was eagerly opened. It contained a motley assortment of old carbines and pistols, and at the bottom were several small, tightly-bolted wooden boxes with an encircling red stripe and the inscription in English: '2000 Pistol Ball Cartridges.'

As they were about to sample these, the Commander came bounding wildly up the gangway. It appeared that Esmeralda had received a telegram stating that the *San Luis Potosi*, with decks cleared for action and every ounce of steam she could raise, was steaming west from Amapala, in Honduras, with the intention of overtaking and capturing them before they could reach Ixastopec.

The engine-room telegraph bell clanged 'Stand-by'; the languid crew was galvanised into action; a dreamy, undersized man who had been rowing the dinghy was taken off, and a larger and more lusty seaman put in his place; the hatch-covers were whisked aside and the cases stowed hurriedly below. Almost before the dinghy's last load had been hoisted aboard, the *Libertad* had weighed anchor and was on the move.

A bright, clean morning, with all the wonderful wine-like quality that the atmosphere of a tropical morning can possess, before the midday sun has scorched the energy out of man and beast, and turned the deep blue sea into a mirror of intolerable blaze.

The *Libertad* cleft her way through oily seas, a mile from the

low-lying shore. Some fifty miles inland, hanging in the air above the mists that coated the jungle, were Fire and Water, twin volcanoes. Pale blue and clear-cut against the glory of the morning sky, yet they were as faint as memories of dreams. The mist from the steaming jungle was soon to hide them.

Blake, sitting on a tarpaulin-covered box in the stern of the little ship, rejoiced; his pipe, as he lit it, seemed the one thing necessary to complete his happiness. He was adventure-bound.

Then there appeared before him a sudden apparition. Henry Hawkins, hair dishevelled, a furtive look in his pale, anxious eyes.

'Op off that box for a minute, will you?' he said. 'There's somefin in it I need.'

Blake hopped. The box, when the tarpaulin had been taken off, proved to be one of the cases labelled 'California Canned Tomato Sauce' for which no room had been found in the hold at the time of their hasty departure. Hawkins produced a cold chisel and a hammer from the hip-pocket of his grimy trousers, and gave a furtive glance round the deck.

'What's the matter?' asked Blake.

'Don't 'inder me, sonny,' said Hawkins, feverishly. 'Things has come to the pitch where I need a gun.'

He inserted the cold chisel between the lid and side of the case, muffled the head of the hammer in a piece of rag, and gave a tap. Glancing round again to reassure himself, he spoke in a husky whisper to Blake:

'Went up on the bridge to tell the Commander that I'd have to slow down a dozen revs, or oil would run short; and just before I got up there, I 'eard 'im and anover bloke talking about 'ow they'd 'ave to stick me up against a wall and shoot me, when they reached Ixastopec. For mutinying in Acajutla, 'e said. So I'm going to get a gun. The squad what they send to fetch me ashore in Ixastopec is going to get its 'ead blown orf.'

'Would they dare do it?' exclaimed Blake, gazing with startled eyes at the little Cockney.

'Would they not! The lives of Britishers and Americans ain't worth a tuppenny—Son of a Gun!'

He jammed the lid of the case down again as if he had seen a ghost within, and sat limply on it. A grin began to creep round his lips.

'Archibald,' he said, addressing Blake in a weak voice. 'Wot the dickens do you suppose there is in this 'ere box?'

'Guns,' said Blake.

'Don't you believe it!' said Hawkins.

'What then?'

'California canned tomato sauce.'

'What!'

Cold sweat started out in beads on Blake's forehead.

'Tomato sauce, sonny. If all the other boxes save that first one are like this, then—then it looks as if these chaps 'ave been sold a pup, and you along wiv 'em!'

And sure enough the case turned out to be filled with cans. Hawkins jabbed one with the chisel, and the red sauce oozed out.

Blake then opened the wallet and dipped into it a trembling hand. He plucked out a packet about the size of a bundle of bills; when he unwrapped it, he found nothing but pieces of newspaper. He opened the wallet again, and peered within. Amongst the packets was an envelope addressed as follows: '*Para Entregar al Sr. Blake.*' He opened it.

'MR. BLAKE,

The object of this letter is to regret that: I have made you another injury how my papa.

You must know that my papa and I are really in favour of De la Huerta, who is rising against these pretenders. It has been explained to my papa that a rebel steamship would come to Acajutla for to take aboard arms and ammunition. Came the *Libertad*, and we thought it rebel steamship. Came to the house the Commander and commoved us with his narrative. We believed him rebel, and showed him the guns. Then we find he was not rebel. What to do? Shortly would come the steamship *S. Luis Potosi*, wanting arms for the cause of freedom. What to do? There was but one thing, that: to deceive them so that they go away again. To send them one case with arms in it, and then hurry them before they could examine the rest. If we let the Commander remain, then he would go to the Minister, and it would be impossible to embark the guns on the *S. Luis Potosi*. But the money? They would examine it. So I gave it to you, telling that you would hand it to Gral. Clodomiro.

And another estranger is embittered of our lands! My tears follow you.

If you survive, please return for your baggage.

ESMERALDA DE CASTILLO Y LARA.'

'Glory Hallelujah!' said Blake. 'Say, 'Awkins; you won't

die alone. They'll be lining me up with you in front of the firing squad.'

'Well, that's somefin,' said Hawkins, looking a little cheered.

He lit his pipe; and, after gnawing the stem for a little while, uttered the profound observation:

'This is no place for you an' me, Benjamin.'

'You've said it,' agreed Blake. 'These guys aren't going to be any the happier because we're there when they open the cases.'

He glanced swiftly around him. Tossing in the foaming wake of the ship was the dinghy; she was attached to a length of cable, much as if she had been the ship's log. Between the vessel and the two volcanic peaks had appeared a break in the jungle wall that extended along the shore. In this break there showed six wooden houses and a small mole, slumbering beneath the fierce sun.

'What's that?' asked Blake, pointing.

'That's San José de Guatemala; it's a mile orf, and there's round fifty million sharks waiting in between. Oo's for a noble death?'

'How about the dinghy?'

'Lummy! Never thought of that!' cried Hawkins. 'And it seems as though all these blokes are taking a little siesta except the Commander and the man at the wheel, and they'—peering round—'are 'aving one of these 'ere 'cart-to-'cart talks that does so much to break down the barrier between the 'aughty orficer and 'is men. Crikey, Bert! Looks like we might do it!'

And he started cautiously to haul in the cable.

When the mole grew large, and the six wooden houses high, and the noise of the tumbling surf sounded in their ears like thunder, Blake and Hawkins paused in their labour, leaned on their oars, and gazed beneath sheltering palms at a black speck on the horizon. It was the *Libertad*, bound for Mexico with her precious cargo of California Canned Tomato Sauce.

'Say, Hawkins,' murmured Blake. 'How are they going to stop that ship?'

'They ain't,' replied Hawkins, grimly. 'They're going on and on till they blooming well 'ave to live on rice.'

THE FATHER OF FATHER MISSISSIPPI.

BY LEWIS R. FREEMAN.

I

THERE was a chill at the break of the day and a chill at the end of the day.

Gulfward-bound from the Rockies, I had put the Yellowstone, Missouri and half the lower Mississippi behind me. The thunder storm which had blotted the morning star and tumbled me out of a tentless camp an hour before dawn left a cold drizzle in its wake. Then the drizzle had been strangled by the fingers of the fog and the lapping, clinging mists had thickened from fluttering curtains of transparency to sodden blankets of translucency, finally to solidify in the blurred blankness of walls of opacity. Or at least I thought that the encircling grey dome in the heart of which I floated was impenetrable to the human eye.

Sight was quenched—drowned. Only sound remained, and not much of that. Not much for a little while, I mean. The whouf-whoufing of a tawny spiral of swirl and the plunkity-plunk of a submerging and emerging snag were all that broke the rhythmic lapping of the tinkling wavelets against the thin skin of my steel skiff. I avoided the stab of a swiftly materialised 'sawyer'¹ with the quick flip of an oar which turned a well-meant thrust for the bow into an innocuous dig along the side.

Rather good sport, drifting in the fog, I told myself. Much preferable to a soggy camp. How quiet it was! How peaceful. . . .

Sudden and savage as a thunderbolt, gashing the air with strident sound, came the blast of a whistle. The throb of engines and the hippo-like breathing of exhausts warned of the imminent menace lurking behind the fog-mask. Intending to drift quietly along under the bank, the suck of the channelward current had carried me into the steamer path, and, awkwardly enough, at the same time that particular reach of river chanced to be in use.

There was serious intent, to say nothing of two hundred and thirty pounds of bone and beef, behind that first wild stroke which was meant to drive my shallop beyond the orbit of the onrushing

¹ The name given by Mississippi River boatmen to a snag so lodged that the upper end of it rises and falls under pressure of the current like the back of a man sawing wood.

Bolt of Wrath. Of course an oar snapped in the rowlock. With all the inertia of a drifting boat to overcome, the wonder was that both oars did not break. Before a spare was shipped the nearing whistle cracked the fog with another blast. Then it snorted excitedly like a rearing horse and a jangle of bells gave the order for reversed engines. I heard the grind of a backed wheel, to the accompaniment of the thunderous roar only made by water that has been paddled in one direction and then suddenly cuffed into tumbling the other.

Now I was all but lifting that featherweight tin skiff from the water as I pulled desperately on a right-angling course that would carry me clear of the path of destruction. Leastaways I thought I was floundering into unoccupied water until a drawling voice, scarcely raised above the tone of ordinary conversation, filtered down to me through the fog.

'If you don't ease down a bit, young man,' it cautioned, 'you're going to ram one of your Uncle Sam's lighthouse tenders, and that's a serious offence.'

I sensed that the owner of that voice was amused and probably grinning. And well he might have been. The ghostly loom of gaunt white upperworks in the thinning mists revealed that my frantic rush for safety had been carrying me straight into the side of the object I was trying to avoid.

Again the voice of the unseen speaker oozed down out of the fog.

'Ease round to the sta'bo'd side and the boys'll give you a hand to the deck. Been looking for you two days. Superintendent in St. Louis suggested I pick you up for a day or two and let you see how we keep the lights a-burning on the ol' Mississipp'.'

And so I came to the U.S. Lighthouse Tender *Oleander* and Captain Tom Good.

He was ringing up the engines for half-speed-ahead as I mounted to the pilot-house, a tall, slender, wiry, iron-grey man whose only unrhythmic movement was a whip-snappingly quick resquaring of his muscular shoulders every time they relaxed an inch from their wonted poise of military alertness.

An extraordinarily fine-looking gentleman of the old school was my first impression. Just that. Then, with both hands still on the spokes of the wheel, he turned from the waist and fixed me with a singularly serious and sympathetic glance of his grave blue eyes. I almost gasped at the momentary seeming of the late Walter Hines

Page revealed in that searching but altogether friendly scrutiny. The resemblance of the veteran Mississippi pilot in both feature and manner to our great war-time Ambassador to Britain has struck me in all our subsequent meetings.

I knew Tom Good had been grinning at me, if only inwardly; and it was because he knew that I knew it that he hastened to put me at my ease.

'Great jaunt you've had down from the Yellowstone,' he said as he dropped a fog-smear window. 'We were talking about it in St. Louis a few days ago. I've heard a lot about the Yellowstone and Missouri from Captain Grant Marsh and the other old-timers. Must have taken smart work to keep from swamping that little duck-boat in the rapids where the Yellowstone tumbles off the back of the Rockies. I knew you weren't a green hand at the oars the way you kept from being caught broadside by that "sawyer" a few minutes ago.'

Not the flicker of a smile twitched the corners of the grave mouth at my gulp of astonishment, but as he went on I sensed again the inward grin.

'Yes, I saw you before you saw me. That was partly because I was looking for you and partly because I've been squinting through fog close to fifty years. Just a matter of getting. . . .'

'Then it's really true, as Mark Twain wrote, that a Mississippi River pilot can see in the dark like a cat, and in the fog like a . . . ' I paused for lack of a comparison.

'No man can see through a thick fog any more than he can see through a board,' came the reply to my unfinished question; 'but in a light fog like this one trained eyes can see farther than others. If Sam said something like that it was nearer true than many things he wrote about the River. Most of the truth that there was he said in jest, and I don't believe he ever knew himself just where one left off and the other began. Droll fellow, Sam Clemens, and a lovable one, but no more of a pilot than—than that old black mammy waiting over there for her oil-cans. . . . Huh? Pomp Brown must be drunk again.'

I looked where the nose of the *Oleander* and that of its skipper pointed—and saw fog. The cumulus-cloud-like umbrage of a pecan tree, the sheer of a cutting bank and the ghostly arms of a light station all took shape before my straining eyes adumbrated the generous bulk of 'ol Mammy Carrie,' who was as much of a pilot as Mark Twain!

As the gang-plank was run out from the forward deck a half-dozen negro deck-hands scrambled ashore and began pulling down the threatened station to move it back the hundred feet toward the levee that that might give it another week of guidance before the relentless fingers of the river were clutching again at its base.

Mincing in precarious balance down the swaying plank, Mammy Carrie waddled aboard to make her official report.

Yeah, her wuthless niggah was drunk again, but since the light had been kept buhnin' she reckoned it wouldn't make no great difruns to Cap'n Tom, speshly since that light nevah had gone out for nigh on twenty yeah.

Captain Tom shook his head and looked stern, but deep down somewhere I sensed a flicker of the inward grin. True, '4XY' never had been reported out, he admitted; but that light stood in Pomp Brown's name, and that was the second time in a year that Pomp hadn't appeared in person. Another day and the station would have caved into the river. And then if a steamboat came along and missed its bearings for lack of a light there would be a wreck—and maybe a hundred lives lost. How would Pomp Brown like the responsibility for that on his soul? Now there was Jim Brownslow. He had ten lights and never left one for the tender to move back. Jim had been asking for a couple of more lights, now he had his new launch, and '4XY' would just round him out. If Pomp Brown. . . .

Speechless horror at the thought of the hundred dead from the wrecked steamer gave way to vocal anguish at the threat of the loss of the light. Pomp Brown would be kept on the job if he had to be drug to it by the scruff of the neck. 'Foh Gawd, Cap'n Tom. . . .'

His lesson driven home, Cap'n Tom released the thumb-screws, handed the terrified old negress the new burner and wicks she had asked for, patted the fat shoulders and sent her back along the plank to where the replenished cans of kerosene ringed the base of the reset station. With a gesture half-weary, half-whimsical, he passed a hand over his bronzed forehead before replacing his cap.

'Seven hundred lights between the mouth of the Missouri and New Orleans,' he sighed, 'and some hundreds of keepers. And every keeper has to be gone at differently to drive home responsibility and keep him up to scratch. Twenty-five years of bucking 'em up and they aren't quite perfect yet. Not quite—but improving all the time. Before I'm through, perhaps . . . But run along

and look at your quarters. There is just time for a bath before breakfast.'

A negro steward shepherded me along to the largest stateroom I had ever occupied on a steamer. A gargantuan steel bed and chairs matched the room, but a something less than boy's size bath-tub was in ridiculous contrast. Needless to say I bathed in sections.

That of Captain Good closed the vista of a double line of grinning phizzes as I took my seat at the breakfast-table.

'You took so long that we were afraid you got jammed in the bath-tub as the first tenant of our guest cabin so nearly did,' the Chief Engineer explained, going on to tell me how the spacious quarters turned over to me had originally been provided to accommodate President Taft on his historic voyage down the Mississippi.

'Make everything as large as possible,' had been, in effect, the orders wired from Washington when it had been decided that the *Oleander* was the most suitable of the available craft for the Presidential cruise. The job had to be rushed through in Cairo, which is not a rushful town. Knocking the partitions out of two or three ordinary cabins had solved the stateroom problem, and finding in a second-hand store the bed and chairs of the fat lady of a defunct side-show that of the furniture. The only hitch was over a bath-tub. If the giantess had possessed anything of the kind it had been disposed of elsewhere. None of even an average size was in stock in Cairo and the one ordered by wire from St. Louis failed to arrive in time. The Lilliputian fount from which I had just emerged was the best that could be provided at the last moment.

There were several versions of what happened to Big Bill Taft on the occasion of his first dip, but all were agreed that he made the serious mistake of trying to bathe the whole of his considerable bulk at once. He actually succeeded in getting *into* the tub—but it took Archy Butt, a Secret Service man and two or three state Governors to overcome the suck of the vacuum beneath and drag him out.

Nosing and sounding for shifting channels, moving light stations, replenishing stores, commending this keeper for his zeal, scolding that one for his neglect, Captain Good had worked the *Oleander* down a score of winding Mississippi miles by the end of the afternoon. 'Tween lights, across the spinning spokes of the big double steering-wheel, we swapped yarns of the queernesses and cursed-nesses of rivers we had known.

I had rattled on about the wide-mouthed Plate, which is broader than it is long, of the impetuous Columbia which has to turn on its

side to wriggle through the hundred-and-twenty-feet-wide chasm of The Dalles; of the deadly Hoang-ho, whose bottom is higher than the surrounding plains and which periodically justifies its name of 'China's Sorrow' by the havoc wrought when it bursts its leveed banks. I was about to add a word of the underground river in New Zealand which can be navigated by the light of the glow-worms clinging to the vault of its limestone roof, when a reminiscent grin on the Captain's face demanded right-of-way for a sudden surge of memories.

'Funny old bag-o'-tricks, the Mississippi,' he said, as his eyes swept back and forth across the turbulent yellow flood rolling miles wide between the Missouri and Kentucky shores. 'You've probably heard of how it cut off a bend and left Vicksburg two miles up a shallow slack-water chute; but did you know there is a long stretch, not far above Memphis, in which you now actually run for miles down-stream where the river used to flow in the opposite direction? A breaking through at two points on a double ox-bow loop turned the trick, but you'd have to have it laid down on the chart to understand just how it happened. The flood that did the juggling came in '76, so the place was given the name' (which it still bears) 'of Centennial Bend. They used to tell a yarn about how a boat that was going down river at the time the break came met itself going up!

'Sam Clemens wrote of the way the river used to chuck pieces of Arkansas and Tennessee back and forth at each other, and of how he tried to find a man in the town of Napoleon ten years after that burg had been washed away altogether. But should you guess that right this minute' (the keen eyes squinted from left to right and back again to check a bearing) 'you are passing directly over the site of the old courthouse and slave market of what was once the flourishing city of Gayoso, Tennessee? "Gayoso by name. Oh so Gay! by nature," as the old joke used to go; and only Natchez-under-the-Hill could outfight and outdrink it in the "Roaring Seventies." First time I saw it was when I was captain of a steamer towing a Circus Boat. First and last on the river, far as I ever heard. Started from——'

But the mention of Natchez-under-the-Hill had touched off my own mental train and I could not forbear cutting in to quote:

'He wa'n't no saint. Them engineers
Wuz pretty much all alike—
One wife at Natchez-under-the-Hill
An' another one here in Pike,'

adding that, at Louisiana, Missouri, I had been proudly shown what was averred to be the very 'willer' where Jim Bludso had made good his oath that he'd

'. . . ram her muzzle against the bank
Till the last galoot's ashore.'

Captain Good had never known, or heard directly of, Jim Bludso. He was not sure whether there had actually been a man of that name or not. But as for the Mississippi engineer generally, John Hay had limned him with clarity if not charity. Still, as to plurality of wives and sweethearts, he rather reckoned that by and large, pilots were rather more light o' love than engineers. 'A lady-love on every levee,' might have been the motto of the early-day pilot, and with few levees as far apart as those of Natchez and Pike Co., Mo., there was usually a flurry of flying fur at every landing. But that was long ago and far away (in time if not in distance). Pilots to-day were model young men. There was not the flicker of a smile in the look of owl-like solemnity with which he greeted his son, Captain Joe Good, for whose benefit the remark was made. But Joe was grinning as he began his trick at the wheel.

'The boy's as good a pilot as any man on the river to-day except his dad; and Joe's a chip of the old block.' Thus the Chief Engineer a few minutes later. Whether that was meant to convey that Joe was, or was not, a model young man, I have never made quite certain.

We paced the forward deck as Joe nosed the *Oleander* slowly down a shallowing chute the while a raucous-voiced 'Cajan' deck-hand hove the lead and sang the soundings.

'Fo' fadum! Quarter-less-three!' and then the familiar 'Mark Twain!' which indicated that there was but twelve feet of water covering the rising bottom.

'Sam Clemens was slow getting the hang of the sounding jargon, which was maybe the reason he picked on the simplest of the lot for his pen name. "Riverese" is a queer lingo; a real "sailor of the sail" is just as baffled by it at the start as a land-lubber. But it's easy enough once you get the swing of it. A hump of sand covered by water is a reef; out of water it is a bar. When a bar gets a grassy growth of young willows it is called a towhead. When cotton-woods choke out the willow and silt and rotting vegetation form a soil the one-time reef attains the dignity and name of island.

A chute is a narrow back-channel on one side of an island. If it

carries water enough a boat may frequently save many miles and much time by using it. Directing a boat "down the shape of a bar" or "along the shape of a bank" means that it should run fairly close to bar or bank, and on a parallel course.

'Of course this all reads about like a cipher telegram until you get the hang of it. A good few of the lights (since they're named from sunk steamboats or plantations) have female names, and these ladies get some funny things said about them every now and again. I've never heard the last of the time I dictated to my clerk that—but I'll show you the note just as it was manifolded and sent out from the Superintendent's office in St. Louis.'

On a much-folded and fingered sheet of paper I read the following:

'From Seven Oak Light to middle of Longwood Bunch, when about two-thirds was over, pull down gradually through the opening. This is shaping Fanny Bullitt's Towhead.'

'Of course every boat and shipping office on the river got a copy of that and I came in for a lot of chaffing. Old "Quaker Oats" Cal Blaizer wrote to ask if I had turned lady's hairdresser.

'And in setting down the directions for navigating the newly-scoured channel between Ruby and Bessie Lights, below Hickman, I was even more unfortunate. I still have to blush when I think of what I said, in all innocence, about "Bessie." That light had been named in honour of a former keeper's daughter who still dwelt by the river and was known far and wide for her charms. Too well known, perhaps. That made it all the worse. Never mind what I wrote. You'll be told soon enough. Ah, speaking of the Devil—there's old "Quaker Oats" drifting his tow of coal barges round the next bend. That's navigating for you. He's got more cargo there than forty old-time packets like the *Lee* and *Natchez* could carry—probably enough to fill thirty ordinary freight trains.

'If he "steered" that bend in the usual way those ten or fifteen acres of barges would smear half a mile of bank and go to pieces. You'd hear cables snapping like gunshots and see the barges piling one on the other like stampeding cattle. But old "Quaker Oats" will "drift" it without setting the quaking aspens ashiver on that caving bank. That's piloting for you! Old Horace Bixby, for all the reputation he had 'count of what Sam Clemens wrote about him, couldn't do that in a thousand years. Bixby was *one* of the best (though not *the* best by a long shot) packet-boat pilots of his day;

but packet-boat piloting was child's play compared to handling big tows. And at that game Harry Nye, Jimmy Martin and old Cal Blaizer over there—all of them still twirling wheels and pushing yellow water—have never been beaten.'

As the *Oleander* ducked through shallows past the slowly swinging tow of deeply laden barges a sturdy figure with a mane of grey hair sweeping his shoulders raised a hand from his wheel and made esoteric signs through the window of the pilot-house. These—from the way Captain Good grinned and reddened—I assumed had reference to the hairdressing of Fanny Bullitt's Towhead, or perhaps to the namesake of Bessie Light, who 'was famed far and wide for her charms.'

The skipper of the lighthouse tender bore no malice.

'They call Cal Blaizer "Quaker Oats",' he explained, 'because he looks like the picture on the breakfast-food package. No, he's not really a Quaker. Quakers speak softly and don't swear. Cal has the only voice on the river that can make itself heard above the roar of a tow of barges busting up in an ice-gorge. And he is almost as famous for his spitting as his piloting. He always has a quid in his cheek and he keeps his spittoon over against the front of the pilot-house beyond the wheel. He can spit through the spinning wheel for watch after watch without tarnishing the brass-work of a spoke.'

This reminded me of the way in which a machine gun is synchronized to fire through the propeller of an aeroplane and I told the Captain what I could of the remarkable electrical contrivance by which this is accomplished. He was inclined to believe, however, that—on account of the unstability of the liquid medium—the feat of old 'Quaker Oats' bordered more nearly on the miraculous. After years of attempted emulation born of envy he still had to keep a port and starboard cuspidor, with an open fairway to each.

Another famous spitter was Tom Garrison, who weighed three hundred and fifty pounds and had been the end-man of a minstrel show before he became a steamboat captain. Tom spat neatly and accurately with tobacco, but his most artistic work had been done with Number 4 shot. He could expel one of these pellets with such force from his muscular lips that a fifty-feet-distant darkey deck-hand would slap his stricken neck and holler 'Wasp!'

Captain 'Wolfie' Clark was a messy spitter but deadly accurate with his revolver. Once he shot the pipe out of the mouth of a steersman. Another time, missing his boat at Louisville, he followed

by train and dropped to the deck of it from the middle span of the Cairo bridge swathed in a white sheet. Not unnaturally, a negro watchman who had last seen 'Wolfie' in his vain race for the boat down the Cincinnati levee yelled 'Bloody murder!' and jumped over the side.

Another of 'Wolfie' Clark's famous exploits was that of dressing up as a woman and keeping a tryst on the Chicksaw Bluffs of Memphis as the sweetheart of one of his pilots, Joe McCullagh. Joe's fickle lady-love had revealed the time and place of rendezvous. The disguised "'Wolfie'-in-Girl's-Clothing,' dim and alluring in the dusk, pressed the proffered bunch of violets to his painted lips, but when the ardent pilot began to fumble for his waistline he jumped up with a wild war-whoop and let off all six shots from his revolver across McCullagh's shoulder. No man with a weak heart had any business working with 'Wolfie' Clark.

The *Oleander's* day, like that of the cotton-hoeing darkey who explained that he worked from 'yu kahn till you kint,' was literally from daylight to dark. Her Captain, twixt grins and chuckles, reminiscenced of the queer-uns of the river all through supper. As we came out upon the deck in the twilight Joe was heading in along the Missouri shore looking for an eddy in which to tie up for the night. Suddenly the prayerful whinings from a crap game on the bow were hushed and I was aware of a jumble of woolly heads peering anxiously up toward the pilot house.

Captain Good focused his keen eyes for a moment where the caving end of an abandoned levee appeared through a break in the fringing cottonwoods. Silhouetted against the expiring flare of the sunset, its ghostly arms extended heavenward as in supplication, was the gaunt frame of a light station.

'Not here, Joe,' he said in a low voice. 'The men will be groaning and sniffing round all night and—well, I'm not hankering after the place myself. The keeper's got enough oil to last him till the return trip. Run on to the slack water beyond the chute. Good place to lie just above where they raided Jed Hawkin's still.'

'Tisn't a nice neck o' the woods for a quiet slumber,' was the answer to my gape of curiosity. 'White squatter killed by a negro in a shack just outside the old levee a few years back. River ate the shack up the same season, and the murderer—well, he succumbed to the opposite element. Got clear away to Texas, and then something drew him back. They caught him sneaking up to the door of his old mammy's cabin and tied him down on a pile of driftwood

below the base of the light station. Story goes that they started the fire with a can of U.S. Lighthouse Service kerosene. Driftwood burns slow and Mose Wilkins was a long time suffocating. They heard him yelling for miles on both sides of the river, and they hear him yet—or so they claim. Most likely it's some haun dawg baying the moon. But our darkey deckhands don't like landing there even in broad daylight; and at night, with a fog settling down—but look at that sheet of mist lapping over the levee from the swamp!'

A stray maverick of down-river zephyr set the moon-track aquiver at the words, and the tail of it, flirting a flap of the fog-curtain, spun it into a gauzy whorl above the ghostly arms of the light station. The yellow eye of the beacon dimmed, paled through luminous lemon to a dull blur of glow and was blotted from sight by the grey wall of blankness.

There was a chill at the end of the day.

Twixt-light-and-light reminiscence flowed fast in the *Oleander's* pilot-house during the days that followed. Now it was an island or a light bearing the name of a sunken steamboat that released the golden stream; now a storied landing, the roof of an old plantation house beyond the levee, or the scar of an ancient crevasse. More often than not one yarn ran on into another, so that the flow was continuous save only for the interruptions of landings, soundings, shiftings of stations and interviews with keepers, white, yellow and black. But of keepers more anon.

Only when his own experiences were concerned did the Captain display reticence. A half-century of Mississippi River history was on tap at my elbow just so long as it was confined to the doings of others; when I pressed for the record of Tom Good the magic stream dwindled, trickled and ceased to flow. Others had had their adventures—the snaggings, the blowings up, the races, the rescues;—for himself he had just jiggered away at the wheel and done the best he could to keep the lights burning. This from the man who, no less an authority than the President of the Mississippi River Commission had assured me, knew 'The Father of Waters' as no pilot before him ever had known it, and as none who came after ever could know.

The brief account I am setting down at this point of how Tom Good came to the Mississippi, and became of the Mississippi, was not extracted at a single session, nor yet during a single day or week. Rather it is a composite of odds and ends he has let slip during the

course of some score of shared watches, pieced out with bits from two of his sons and several of his earlier and later shipmates.

The stock was Dutch on the Good side—Pennsylvania vintage. Tom, preceded by six or eight brothers and sisters, was born in Covington, Kentucky, in 1861. His grandfather kept a ship chandlery shop on the Cincinnati water-front. His father, a man of energy and initiative, became captain of a packet running from Ohio River points to New Orleans in the fifties. During the Civil War he was employed by the Federal Government in the construction and operation of boiler- and railway-iron protected river-craft. In 1869 he was called to St. Louis to organise and manage the Mississippi Barge Line, in which he subsequently became a partner.

Most of Tom's brothers and sisters were highly proper young folk, anxious to get on in the world and so eager to fall in with Good père's plan to send all his children through school and college. Only Tom and another brother had low tastes, preferring the levee to the schoolroom, the river roustabout to the master. When this brother was drowned swimming in the Mississippi, Tom remained as the only family problem. The threat of a hiding every time he was caught setting foot on the levee proved an irritant, not a deterrent.

The boy's earliest tangible recollections were of the great Eads Bridge in construction, with the three- and four-deep lines of river-packets along the levee below. The fifties marked the peak of the packet-boat trade, but—between the Ohio, upper and lower Mississippi and the so-called Rocky Mountain traffic to three-thousand-miles-distant Fort Benton on the Missouri—it was still strong and prosperous in the seventies. Extinction—swift and almost complete—did not come until a decade or two later.

The first big event of Tom's life came at the age of ten. St. Louis had seethed for days with talk of the great race between the *Natchez* and the *Robert E. Lee*. Now they were being groomed in New Orleans. Now they were off; now passing Memphis; now Cairo; now they were on the home-stretch. The *Lee* was leading and, barring snags, grounding or a boiler explosion, would reach St. Louis first. Licking or no licking, young Tom was not going to miss that event. When his father, who was on the committee of distinguished citizens named to receive and do honour to the winner, refused to take him to the stand at Eads Bridge, the young river-rat set off on his own.

I will set down the story just as he told it himself to me in the pilot-house of the *Oleander*, nearly sixty years after the historic

event. We had put in to replenish oil at Yucatan Light, forty miles below Vicksburg, and not far from Palmyra Island, so long the plantation home of Jefferson Davis. Backing off into the channel, Captain Good remarked casually that we would just about be passing over the hull of the *Robert E. Lee*. It had burned to the waterline there some time in the eighties, not very long after he and his young wife had taken their honeymoon voyage on it.

'Always felt a bit sentimental about the *Lee* on that account,' he went on as the bow swung down-stream and he rang up for full speed ahead. 'No other reason, too—but had I told you I watched the *Robert* lead the *Natchez* into St. Louis in seventy-one? The old home was only a few blocks from the levee, but there was such a jam of people all along the bank that we—the gang of street gamins with which I herded—had to go two miles and half below town before we could get a clear view from the bank. There were sawmills down there at that time, and a big log-raft from Minnesota offered a fine vantage for any that could keep a footing. We kids led the way out and after us came the hundreds that crowded down later.

'The first sign we saw of the *Lee* was a big cloud of smoke—boiling and swirling up black as bitumen, for she was firing with pitch. The glint of gilt on the funnels began to flicker in the sunlight as she rounded into the straight from Carondelet, six miles away. Then the texas humped against the skyline and at last we saw the bow tearing through the water. Everyone was yelling like Indians, but the one thing I remember out of all the bedlam of cries was the booming voice of a big buck nigger who kept shouting "Look at him froffin' at the mouf!" A tumbling bow-wave has always been a "froffin' at the mouf" to me ever since.

'The *Lee* roared past us faster than I have ever seen any river boat speed to this day. The big wall of water pushed ahead and drove our log-raft grand-stand high up on the sloping mud bank; then the depression sucked after dragged it back into the river again. Men and women and kids were tumbling over each other, and a lot must have fallen between the rolling logs. Some must have been killed or drowned. I don't recall ever hearing, and I wouldn't have remembered if I had. That sight of the roaring, snorting old *Robert E. Lee* occupied my thoughts to the exclusion of everything else for many days. I don't even remember whether I got a hiding or not when I forgot myself at supper and bragged that I had seen the *Lee* before dad had. Hidings were too common in those days to be

remembered long anyhow. It would have been easier to recall the days I did not qualify for one.

'The faster boat? Well, chances are there was not much to choose between them. The *Lee* owed most of the margin of its victory to the strategy of fueling from towed barges. With the race run over again and the *Natchez* doing the same thing—and just as smartly—either one might have won. Fact remains that the *J. M. White*, which never would be drawn into a race, was faster than anything on the river. Its record of six hours between Baton Rouge and New Orleans was better than the *Lee* could have done.

'The *White* belonged to a man named Tobin. When he ordered it from the Howard shipyard at Jeffersonville, on the Ohio, where the *Lee*, *Natchez*, *City of Alton* and all of the best packets were built, he stipulated that it should be "a bird of paradise for beauty and an express train for speed." There might have been some difference of opinion as to the resemblance to a bird of paradise, but it sure had the speed. Its nickname was "Tobin's Train," and till it burned up near Graveyard Light, just above Bayou Sara, nothing on the river could make the *White* eat its smoke. Just why Tobin would not, or did not, race I never quite understood.

'The *City of Alton* was also very fast. Its record of just over thirty-one hours from Memphis to St. Louis was better than that of the *Lee*. I believe it was old Horace Bixby who drove the *Alton* on that record run. Horace was erratic on account of drink, but at his best he had few equals. Yet he was never the wizard Sam Clemens tried to make out. No man's piloting prowess was quite the equal of Sam's imagination.'

(To be continued.)

'THE JUDGE.'

BY CHARLES RIDDELL.

It was shortly before two o'clock on a November afternoon when Mr. Justice Foster arrived at the Central railway station of a great provincial city in the North of England, and threaded his way through the nondescript crowd of travellers, officials and mere loiterers to the barrier of the Down platform. No one recognised him there or as he tendered his ticket to the collector and walked slowly along the side of the London express. Short in stature, with a distinguished presence and a fine head, he was by no means an old man, and yet his face was prematurely lined and he moved with the stiffness of a man whose life has been for the most part sedentary. Except for a brief stop before the bookstall where he bought a copy of one of the more sedate monthly magazines, he proceeded without deviation until he reached the restaurant car, into which he hoisted himself carefully and a little laboriously. Arrived in the car itself he chose a separate seat, backing the engine, lifted his despatch case into the rack above and, folding his overcoat neatly, laid it across the vacant place opposite. These preliminaries accomplished, he sat down with a slight feeling of relief and, drawing from his waistcoat pocket a leather case, adjusted a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles, glanced at the heavy gold watch which had belonged to his father, and took up the magazine just purchased. An observer of perception, had one been present, would have recognised in his bearing and expression signs of fatigue and evidence of worry.

The Autumn Assizes had ended late the night before, after a three weeks' sitting at the city which he was about to leave. His brother judge had departed by the night train, his marshal had the day before asked and obtained leave of absence to attend a Hunt Ball, and his clerk was travelling third class: so that the Judge was unaccompanied on his journey back to London. The calendar had been a full one for this Assize, and he had needed to sit late on several occasions. Besides the familiar run of sordid and depressing crimes he had had to try a charge of murder of an unusually sensational and complex character, and, the criminal causes having been disposed of, he had sat to hear a number of commercial dis-

putes, some long and some short, but all of them requiring the closest attention and scrutiny. A grave charge of fraud against one of the most eminent merchants of the city had caused him much anxiety and, though long experience had fortified him against an excessive regard for criticism, he had been conscious, when he began to sum up to the jury, that whatever he said would inevitably be subject to adverse comment. Furthermore, at the end of the sittings he had heard a number of divorce petitions, a class of case with which he was unfamiliar, and, although most of these were undefended, two at least had been contested bitterly and he had been left at the end in the position of being unable in law to dissolve marriages which, as a human being, he knew could never now be anything but mockeries. Except for one or two dinners with High Sheriffs and other functionaries at the various Assize towns and a visit to a widowed sister living in the North, he had spent most of his evenings reading documents in part-heard cases or consulting authorities on propositions of law advanced by counsel. Even now as he was waiting for the train to start he did not read but sat reviewing in his mind his decisions of the previous weeks.

He could not help wondering whether he had been right to inflict that sentence of a year's imprisonment on the house-breaker who had robbed the grocer's till in Birkenhead. True, the police had proved two previous convictions against the prisoner, but they both dated from long ago, and nevertheless he had liked the fellow's bearing in the dock and the way in which he gave his account of himself. And then again : ought he to have admitted the evidence of the pawnbroker in the case about the stolen pearls ? It had not, he thought, been at all a plain case, but the jury had seemed to have no difficulty in finding their verdict of guilty. Oh well, the prisoner could always appeal, though, as the Judge well knew, the Court of Criminal Appeal was an unsympathetic body and apt only too easily to take the view that even if there had been an irregularity at the trial, no substantial miscarriage of justice had resulted. A number of other considerations arising out of recent cases flitted through his mind. Had he really understood all the ramifications of the Stock Exchange dispute which had come before him at Manchester, and had he allowed the moneylender at Carlisle too small a rate of interest on his highly speculative loan to Lord — ? In vain he attempted to concentrate on his magazine and to rid himself of these unwholesome speculations : his brain would somehow keep returning to this and that point of difficulty or doubt.

All his time on the bench he had tried to cure himself of the habit of reconsidering cases after they were over. It was a stupid practice, born of excess of zeal and conscience. It did not do for a judge to look back. He should do his best while the case was before him and then dismiss it from his mind, which must be fresh for the next matter upon which it had to concentrate. He found, however, this ideal of conduct hard to live up to. His brain was so keen and his temperament so sympathetic: he was so interested both in the law and in the human relationship of litigants and witnesses who came before him. Ever anxious that justice should be done, he was yet more scrupulous that as far as possible it should always seem to be done. It hurt him to hear ordinary intelligent citizens say that the law was foolish, and yet often, though he might not admit it, he was inclined to agree with them. He was known and respected in the legal professions as a fair-minded courteous judge with a fine scholarly grasp of the law and a remarkable capacity for marshalling and analysing complicated facts, and yet in himself he felt at times that the responsibilities which fell on him were so serious and fraught with so much anxiety that he would almost rather be in any position than that which he occupied.

It was with these and similar reflections in his mind that the Judge heard the guard's whistle and felt the wheels of the train shiver and commence to revolve beneath him, as the express, gathering speed every second, steamed out of the station. Almost immediately the attendants began to serve luncheon and for a while, in the intervals of eating the greasy unappetising food set before him, the Judge occupied himself by observing out of the window grimy suburbs and, later on, bare fields and desolate farm buildings. He drank water only, and at the end of the meal he rummaged in his pocket and, producing therefrom a well-worn pipe, filled it slowly and contemplatively with that 'Bodley Mixture' tobacco which he had used ever since he was at Oxford, and which now was sent to his home in regular quantities from the very same pokey little tobacconist's shop in the Turl where he had first purchased it nearly forty years ago. The action of filling the pipe and the aroma of the tobacco sent his mind back to Oxford, and he thought musingly of the good times he had had and the good friends he had made there. His first in 'Greats' proved that he had worked hard, and it was no light feat to have succeeded at the same time in rowing in the College eight which, in his third year, had gone Head of the

River. Those had been fine careless years, but even then he had not been unambitious. Quite early he had made up his mind to go to the Bar and he had conscientiously prepared himself for his career by speaking assiduously at the Union. Called to the Bar within a year of coming down from Oxford, there had followed several years of arduous pupillage and 'devilling' before he had been able to collect a small circuit practice. He had married early and his marriage had been happy in spite of, or perhaps in part by reason of, a slender professional income and a lack of private means. His wife had borne him five children, three sons and two girls, the eldest son being now twenty-three years old. As the years had gone on and the children began to grow up, his practice had increased, and for a few years before and after 'taking silk' he had made a steady and not unsubstantial income. The expenses of his family and of his position had however given him little chance to save and when, at a comparatively early age, the Lord Chancellor of the day had offered him a vacant judgeship in the King's Bench Division, although to take it meant a reduction in the income he was then making, he had felt it both his duty and politic in the long run not to refuse it. Although he would have liked to have been in the House of Commons, he had never been able to afford the expenses of a political career, and now, having been on the bench for a number of years, he had several times been passed over for promotion to the Court of Appeal in favour of men whose political connections alone commended them above him to those in authority. It was true that after some years' more service he would be entitled to retire on a pension, but he doubted whether he would be able to do so, seeing that neither of his daughters was out in the world yet and his youngest son had only just gone to school.

At this moment the Judge's train of thought was interrupted by the arrival of the attendant, who dexterously cleared the table and removed the cloth, and of the conductor who even more expeditiously made out the bill, received the silver tendered in payment, proffered the change and, at a gesture from the Judge, pocketed it with a breezy, 'Thank you very much, sir.' Left alone again with his thoughts, the Judge lit a match and leaned back in his seat slowly puffing at his pipe. Yes, no one knew better than he that money by no means necessarily spells happiness. Still, all his life he had been a little hampered by lack of it. The inevitable cares of his profession had always been accentuated by financial uncertainty. When he was young he had been able to take such worries

lightly, but of late he had found it increasingly difficult not to fret at the constant endeavour to make every shilling go a little further than it naturally would. He remembered how years ago his father had expressed a doubt as to the wisdom of his attempting the Bar without even a small private income, and how he had brushed aside his father's doubts with the force and glamour of his own ambition. Perhaps the remedy would have been to have had a smaller family, and yet, as he thought of each of his children individually and of his interest in and love for each and all of them, he could not find it in his heart to reproach himself for anything on that score. Nevertheless it was on their account that the smallness of his resources really irked him.

His eldest son, Francis, who was so like him, for example; it had really distressed the Judge not to be able to send him to Oxford. Francis would have made so much of college life and would, he knew, have taken so readily to the true idea of a University. How many friends he would have made there and how popular he would have been! Oh well, he mustn't be narrow-minded about life. Oxford wasn't everything and a man who went out young into the world of struggle and competition very often got something out of life which a varsity-trained man missed. Still he couldn't conceal from himself that it had hurt him horribly at the time to have to put his eldest son at eighteen years old straight into a bank as junior clerk and still more to say good-bye to him a year later when he sailed east to serve in a Colonial branch. His second son had early on shown an aptitude for mechanics and he had sent him to take an engineering course at one of the newer provincial universities, where he still was and likely to take a first-class degree, so his professors said. The Judge had visited this son once when he was passing through the big sprawling dirty modern manufacturing city from which the university took its name, and had there met some of his friends—good boys, hard working and intelligent, but rough and uncultured and somewhat uneasy and aggressive in social intercourse. His girls too, who were twins, he thought of them and of how lucky it was, now that they had left school and just before they 'came out,' that his wife's sister, who had married an American and lived in Paris, had offered to have them to stay with her for six months, 'just to give them a polish,' as she had written in her kind-hearted direct way; for he himself could never have afforded to put them to one of those expensive finishing schools. His last boy, Eric, was a good deal younger than the rest,

and it might be, if the girls married early and reasonably well, that he would be able to give him all the chances that he would have liked to give the others. Well, well, there would be time enough in the future to decide about that. No good jumping fences before one got to them, he reflected as he knocked the dead ashes from his pipe against the window-ledge. It was too late, though, he thought, for his wife and himself to do the travelling they had always looked forward to. It had been lucky perhaps that when they were both young they had spent several vacations in Italy and France; but Spain, Greece, the East—all those places they had meant to visit—how far away they seemed and how unlikely that they would ever get to them now.

The train was now running at top speed and, as the Judge turned sideways to look out of the window, the telegraph poles seemed to dart by with a mechanical regularity, monotonous and wearying. He began to feel drowsy: the magazine slipped off his knee and on to the floor. Lazily he began to try to count the telegraph poles, but without success; the rapidity of their coming and going mocked him. He closed his eyes, his head dropped a shade forward and in a moment or two he was asleep.

The Judge was awakened by a jerk, caused evidently by the stopping of the express. He heard confused sounds outside the window and, peering sleepily through the glass, saw that the train was drawn up alongside a station platform. He shifted his position slightly, closed his eyes again and was once more slipping into unconsciousness, when he became aware of a burly figure standing upright beside him and heard a loud voice saying in somewhat nasal tones: 'Say, has anyone gotten a reservation on this seat?'

The Judge roused himself hurriedly and sat up straight. Immediately in front of and leaning towards him he saw a pleasant fresh-complexioned face, a baldish head fringed at the sides with iron-grey hair, a pair of mobile dark-blue eyes and a square, rugged, clean-shaven chin. The question had evidently been addressed to him and, since the stranger was pointing with a florid gesture at the judge's coat lying across the seat opposite, the Judge got up as quickly as he could, retrieved his property, and deposited it in the rack along with his despatch case. As he did so, he murmured apologetically: 'I beg your pardon: ought not to have left it there.'

'Not at all,' continued the stranger affably. 'I'm real sorry,

sir, to have disturbed your nap.' So saying, he deposited a large grey felt hat upon the table between them, sat down in the vacant seat opposite without removing his light tweed overcoat, and, feeling in an inner pocket, produced a large morocco leather cigar-case decorated with a gold monogram. Opening the case he offered it to the judge with words: 'Will you join me in a cigar, sir?'

'No, thank you. If you don't mind I think I'll have a pipe.'

The stranger lit a cigar for himself, felt in the right-hand pocket of his overcoat and pulled out a large magazine with a bright-coloured cover design, which he laid upon the table beside his hat.

'D'y'ever read that?' he queried, indicating the magazine. 'A swell paper, up to date, clean, and believe me, the finest advertising medium in the world!'

The Judge, who recognised the periodical in question as a popular transatlantic weekly which he had often seen hanging on underground railway bookstalls, shook his head, and, bending down, picked from off the floor his own magazine which in turn he placed upon the table, where its drab biscuit-toned exterior contrasted oddly with the colour riot of the other.

'I don't have much time for reading except during vacation,' he observed.

'Sure: same here. But I've had to do a deal of travelling this fall, and for railroads and steamer trips I certainly have found this publication a big stand-by.'

The Judge here found himself at a loss for a suitable reply. Anxiety on that score, however, was unnecessary, for the stranger continued without delay:

'Gosh, it's great to be back in England. I haven't been here in twenty years, and when the ship fetched up in dock at noon yesterday I was plumb crazy to find myself here again.'

'You're from America, I take it,' said the Judge.

'Yes, sir. And from way over the coast too, for I've travelled direct here night and day from California.'

The Judge had by now had time to take stock of his fellow-traveller and, whereas a less intelligent or a less tolerant man might have found the latter's jocularly affected and jarring, he on the contrary, after close observation, found something attractive and infectious in the American's enthusiasm and buoyancy. He decided that the stranger was about his own age, although he looked considerably younger, and he judged him, in spite of his fairness, to be not wholly of Anglo-Saxon descent.

'Come over on business, I suppose?' he asked.

'Sure. I'm a movie actor and when two of your film corporations offered me dandy contracts at the same time, I said to my wife "Honey, this is some break. Put on your bonnet and shawl, and you and I and the girls'll cross the ocean and take a swift peep at Old England." They couldn't get off the mark quick enough for me—wanted to hang about in New York an' buy frocks, I guess. So I hopped it on my own an', by the time they make Southampton in another two weeks, I hope I'll have some place fixed for them to come to.'

Interested and encouraged by the stranger's manifest readiness to talk about himself and his family, the Judge ventured to ask him how old his daughters were.

'Milly the elder's seventeen, and Edie just a year younger. Fine girls, smart, done well at college, ride a horse anyways you like an' know their own minds. But to tell you the truth,' and here he lowered his voice, 'I'll not be sorry to have 'em in Europe a bit. The bum liquor young folks gets hold of nowadays back home! You wouldn't believe it. Why it sure terrifies me. No harm in the girls I know but, hang it man, I don't like to see my daughters in an' out of speakeasies 'most every night of the week.'

It looked as if at any moment the conversation might turn into the usual discussion as to the merits and demerits of Prohibition and to avoid this the Judge hastily asked: 'And how long do you expect to be in England?'

'Oh 'bout six months—longer maybe if they offer me good terms on other contracts. Anyway, after I've finished my work I intend to take the family on a bit of a Continental trip—France, Germany, and so on'; he waved his hand vaguely, indicating the endless possibilities of travel: then more seriously as a new thought came into his mind. 'Say though, you might be able to help me if you'd be so kind. I mean to take a country house somewhere's this part of England while I'm here. Have week-end parties an' give the girls a chance to get some fox-hunting. I stopped off at the burg where I just got in to see a place which I heard recommended, but it was no darn good to me—no electric light and the hell of a small garage. But the guys at the real estate office there told me of another place that might suit—Gee, what was the name?'

He began to search in his pocket-book and after a few seconds produced a slip of paper which he handed to the Judge.

'That's the place,' he said. 'Ever heard of it?'

The Judge took the paper and, putting on his spectacles, read thereon: 'Harefield Manor, near Melton, Leicestershire.' As he read the words his mind took a little jump and he saw himself an undergraduate, and earlier still a small grubby boy, wandering in a park filled with tall trees and looking at a friendly three-storied Georgian house with two Doric pillars supporting the portico over the front door. It was the house he had first noticed as a house and not merely as a conglomeration of rooms and passages, and he had always loved it more than any other house he had seen in the world. It had belonged years ago to an old bachelor cousin of his father, and as a boy the judge had stayed there often with the old man, 'Uncle Henry' as he used to like to be called. After Uncle Henry's death the house had, he knew, changed hands several times and it had always been a great hope of the judge that some time in his career he would be able to buy it or at any rate to rent it for a time so that his children might to some extent grow up in it as he had. But the time had never come and some years ago he had given up the project altogether. He came back to earth with something of a start.

'Why, what a strange coincidence!' he said to the expectant stranger. 'I used to stay in that house when I was a boy. It's a fine old place with good large rooms, and the stabling at the back is so ample that you'll surely be able to house all the cars you want to there. I can't tell you about electric light though: in my day it was lamps and candles. I don't know if it's been altered.'

'Yes, the agent told me that was all correct. And what took my fancy was that there's hot water in all the bedrooms, three bath-rooms and central heat all over the house.'

At this the Judge, though in no way old-fashioned, could not help wincing. Of course there must have been alterations, but somehow he resented them. They destroyed his personal image of the house and he found it hard to think of Uncle Henry in connection with hot-water pipes and vivid white electric light.

'If that's so, I should think the house ought to suit you admirably,' he volunteered, 'and it's in the very middle of the best hunting country.'

'Well, I sure am much obligated to you, sir. It certainly has been a help to find someone who's known and lived in the house. I'll go back this week-end and look it over, and I shouldn't be surprised if by Monday I hadn't signed the lease and begun to collect some horses for the girls.'

'You'll be finding this rather an expensive trip, I expect, before you're through with it,' suggested the Judge.

'Maybe, but I can afford it. You see, sir, I've done pretty well at my job right along and I've been in the movies ever since they started. Mind you, I'm not what's called a "star." You won't find my name in big print on the show bills. But I'm nigh indispensable to the folk in Hollywood; and I never made the mistake early on of binding myself down by a long contract to a particular concern. Not me, sir. I work for all the corporations. I've created a type and I've made a corner in it, an' they know darn well they can't get on without me.'

The Judge was just about to ask what the type in question was, when the stranger, who was by now leaning forward enthusiastically with his elbows on the table, broke in again with animation: 'I think I can say, without boasting or any of your high-hat stuff, that there's darn few film stars out of the whole bunch who've made the money I have over a long period. Why, every year the last ten years I've gotten not a cent less than sixty thousand dollars.'

He paused to let the figure sink in, thereby giving the Judge time to do the mental division by five which nearly all Englishmen whose minds are linked to pounds, shillings and pence, have to do in order to convert dollars into pounds. The result of the calculation was a little disconcerting. Making all necessary allowances, it appeared that the stranger's income was more than double the Judge's own.

'And the beauty of it is,' continued the stranger, 'that it's easy work. I'm not at it continually by a long chalk. I live with my wife up at the house I built for us on Beverley Hills, and a lot of the time I'm playing lawn tennis with the kids, or pottering about the garden looking at the finest view God ever created. Then, if I'm wanted in the studio, the chauffeur runs me down in the Lincoln and waits for me till I'm through. You see the secret of it is—I've never mixed myself up with the producing end. If you do that, you're no better than a slave. I've had many offers, but I've stuck to my acting and it's never let me down yet.'

In the sweep and vigour of his discourse the stranger had allowed his cigar to go out and the Judge struck a match and handed it to him. With a nod of thanks he proceeded. 'Of course, over this side I shan't be able to take things so easy, I daresay. They tell me the business here ain't as highly geared and organised yet awhile

as it is with us, and maybe there'll be a good deal of waiting around that I've lost the habit of. But I don't mind, 'cause, apart from what I told you about the girls, I've a particular reason for wanting to be over here at the moment. You see I sent my eldest son to Harvard. He's taking law school there now an' doing mighty well so they tell me—a regular fellow, popular on the Campus and was on the ball team this summer. Of course I could put my younger boy to Harvard too, or Princeton or Dartmouth or one of those, but just lately I've gotten a sort of notion back of my head that he's the kind of a lad that an English education would get the best out of. And so I'm going to get over to Oxford once or twice this winter, and maybe Cambridge too, prospect about a bit an' see if I think one of them wouldn't be the place for him. What do you know about that, sir? D'ye think a hundred-per-cent American boy with a good school education and plenty of pep would make good at the old University of Oxford?'

The Judge answered cautiously, and was forthwith drawn into a description of Oxford life, the tutorial system, the difference between Association and Rugby football, the merits of audit ale and other kindred topics. Thereafter the stranger, who, it appeared was unaccustomed to remain long a listener, took over the conversation and the Judge listened for about an hour to a highly interesting and clearly phrased account of the moving and talking picture industry in the United States. He heard of 'shots' and 'camera angles' and 'sound tracks' and 'panchromatic lighting' and all the other jargon words which have been coined for the mammoth art-industry of which civilisation has so recently been brought to birth.

The train began to pass through the suburbs of London as his companion still talked on of the wonders which had been and the wonders which were to come. About the 'talkies' he was emphatic.

'Depend upon it, they've come to stay,' he asserted. 'Nothing can hold 'em. And I thank my stars I was trained as a real actor in the old days. When I started, every actor on the road in America had, if necessary, to be able to talk good Berkeley Square English, or he didn't get a job. And I've never forgotten mine. I daresay, as you listen to me here, you think that I'm about the most American thing that ever walked into England on two legs, but, believe me, if you heard me on the screen in some of my parts, you'd never know I'd ever been in America. Why, for the sort of stuff I do——'

'Forgive me,' interjected the Judge, 'I was going to ask you.

In case I ever see one of your films, what is your type? What sort of parts do you play?'

'Judges, sir,' replied the stranger, 'always judges: judges of the Supreme Court, State and Federal judges, English judges, French, German, Russian, every sort of judge. You see there's a wonderful scope in that line. They're always wanting trial scenes. Nothing like a trial scene for human drama. Good comedy, too, if only the stuff's properly written. Of course I like playing English judges best—wigs and robes, black cap an' all that sort of thing. Gives an atmosphere, makes one so much more impressive, more dominating. Why you should have seen me as the Lord Chief Justice in "Passion and the Law." Gee, I had a swell make-up in that.'

'I'm sure you had,' replied the Judge meekly.

'Then again, you'll understand, I'm not confined to modern parts. Not a bit: I've been in lots of costume and historical stuff in my time. Why, my Judge Jeffreys in "The Bloody Assize" had re-markable notices even in the highbrow monthlies.'

The train was now slowing down and jolting into the terminus. The stranger stuffed his magazine into his pocket, took up his cigar-case and hat, and extending his hand to the Judge, grasped the latter's warmly with the words: 'Very happy to have met you, sir. A most enjoyable journey. If you should ever be in Los Angeles, let me know. I'd be more than glad to have you meet the wife. Ask for Joseph R. Schwartz. The cops all know me there, you bet! Good-bye, sir, good-bye.'

He was gone. The Judge gathered his belongings together and descended stiffly on to the platform. There he was met by his clerk, and together they collected a porter and the luggage. Slowly they followed the barrow to the front yard of the station. The evening was dark and it was drizzling steadily, so that the Judge turned up his collar as he felt the cold damp air on his chest. The porter went to fetch a taxi and the Judge and his clerk stood on the kerb under a gas lamp, moving their feet up and down in an endeavour to keep warm. Suddenly the deep rich note of an electric motor-horn was heard on their right and, immediately after, a massive Daimler swept by them, splattering their shoes and trousers with mud as it passed. The interior of the car was fully lighted and as it went by, Mr. Justice Foster had just time to catch a glimpse of Mr. Joseph Schwartz seated inside, upright and alone, a cigar screwed into one corner of his mouth and a heavy fur rug across his knees.

PUSS.

BY G. F. BRADBY.

I. POPE.

AWAKE, Clarissa ! and with me explore
 The devious avenues of feline lore ;
 Leave Art and Science to the arid schools
 That prate of learning, but encourage fools :
 Let History slumber on the dusty shelf,
 Tired by the repetition of itself ;
 Or, should they tempt thee, make this coy excuse,
 'The proper study for a puss is Puss.'

First choose with care the colour of thy pet,
 Whether of tabby, tortoiseshell or jet ;
 Let one suffice. Eschew the Persian breed,
 Condemned for folly and despised for greed,
 Eager for notice, avid of applause,
 Now whining beggar, now a thief with claws.
 Thy puss must learn to let the dishes lie,
 And view the cream with an indifferent eye,
 Forgo the capon and abjure the cates,
 Nor add a spurious polish to the plates.
 For friend or stranger keep an open house,
 But let Graymalkin's dinner be a mouse.

Alas ! how oft we miss the middle way !
 And puss, like man, is liable to stray.
 Be prompt to punish, in the Spartan mode,
 The first digressions from the moral code.
 Virtue goes downwards by a slow incline,
 And one initial slap oft cancels nine.
 Unchecked, thy Tabby would aspire to snare
 Thy neighbour's parrot or thy landlord's hare,
 Rifle the forest, raid forbidden ground,
 To snatch cheap laurels from some craven hound,
 Or roam thy bushes, when the moon is high,
 And vex the modest with her amorous cry.

Be thine the daily task to curb and prune
 Each wayward fancy, each illicit tune ;
 Too wise to argue, too refined to scold,
 Warm in affection, but in judgment cold ;
 Submitting Vengeance to the law of God,
 But treating Misdemeanour with the rod.

Corrected thus, and thus restored to grace,
 The parlour sees her in her proper place,
 Stretched on the rug or seated on a stool,
 But still with Manners for her golden rule ;
 Courteous to age, invisible at tea,
 Nor too familiar with the Parson's knee,
 Patient of music, tolerant of guile,
 Averse from Curates, yet content to smile,
 Proud without malice, grave without pretence ;
 And let her purring prove her common sense.

II. MODERN.

A voice in the bushes !
 In the little vermilion bushes on the corner of the crimson moon,
 Singing to my subconscious self,
 Pure, palpitating, obscene ;
 Scattering hot water-drops over the cool shadows of my desire,
 Like blown peonies in a bowl of cream,
 Like warm custard poured over a lemon ice ;
 Unlike anything Victorian.
 A voice in the bushes, and a voice in my ears,
 Becoming One in the half-consciousness
 Which is ME.

A song in the bushes !
 In the sea-green bushes immediately under my window ;
 And it has awaked me from a pallid dream,
 A pallid dream of white limbs, and hips swaying sensually ;
 (Oh hips ! Oh divine word !)
 And, now that I have awaked from my pallid dream,
 I recognise the voice that is singing :
 It is a cat :
 Hell !

A cat in the bushes!
Singing to itself and to me, and to the crimson moon,
A strange song that compels attention.
Why did I say 'Hell!'?
I cannot answer now.
But why did I say 'Hell!'?
I forget.

A cat is a lonely spirit with a temperament,
A thing with an obsession
And lascivious green eyes,
An artist struggling for self-expression,
Hungry for distinguishing lights,
For the raw red lime-lights that flicker eternally above the stars,
But never fall on me.
Oh Puss! Oh Me!

A song in the bushes!
The song of my desire.
A great master is singing a new song to the crimson moon,
In the bushes sick with dew:
A song for muted strings and one trombone,
A song that means everything and nothing,
A song of Algebra,
The perfect form of Art.
And now I know what I must do.
Always I have been so sad,
So lugubrious,
Like a North window facing a blank wall,
Or a gramophone without records.
But now I know what I must do:
I will be a Cat!
I will go on all fours into the bushes
And sing a new song to the crimson moon.
Little one, I am coming;
My thin hands are furry, and my hips sway delicately:
Wait for me, wait for me!
I am looking for goloshes on the moonlit carpet of my room,
For black goloshes on the moonlit carpet of my white room;
But I am coming,
I am coming into the bushes sick with dew,
To sing with you.

THE MYSTERY OF LEEDS CASTLE.

A TRAGIC STORY OF THE REIGN OF EDWARD II.

BY MRS. E. V. PATERSON.

THE ancient moated Leeds Castle near Maidstone had one mysterious incident in its history, which has puzzled historians for centuries, namely, the extraordinary refusal of Lady Badlesmere to admit Queen Isabella, the wife of Edward II, who was on a pilgrimage to Canterbury and wanted to rest the night at the Castle.

The immediate result of this refusal was the siege of the Castle, followed by tragedy and war.

It has been customary to use hard, scathing words whenever any reference has been made to the Badlesmeres, but there is another side of the picture; the Queen would not have been treated so disloyally and inhospitably had not urgent reasons prompted the refusal.

After a search among records of the period, it can be seen that there was a plot against the Badlesmeres, and as the facts come to light, there is a gradual unfolding of a most tragic story of injustice, cruelty and human suffering, which makes us thank God civilisation has advanced sufficiently to make such awful experiences no longer possible.

The Leeds Castle incident cannot be understood without retracting events and learning a little about the leading characters moving on the stage in that reign.

As 'Steward of the King's Household' Bartholomew de Badlesmere was a familiar figure at the Court of Edward II.

Early in the reign responsible State ministers had arranged Edward's marriage for him, and Lord Badlesmere was one of the first to welcome the fifteen-year-old Queen when she arrived from the French Court. A strange lonely life, at first, awaited her; occasionally her husband would appear to be aware of her existence, but he was far more interested in attending tournaments with his favourite, Piers Gaveston, and in their practical jokes together. They would amuse themselves giving nicknames and making fun of the more serious among the barons.

One day as Edward leaned out of a window he caught sight of Isabella walking in the courtyard below ; the sight of her reminded him of her dowry and its generous proportions, and suddenly appreciating this fact, he decided that her wealth would be useful ; it would make a grand gift for Piers.

It was Badlesmere's unpleasant duty to tell the Queen her fortune was lost ; with despair she realised to the full all this meant and the hopelessness of any appeal to the King, while Badlesmere, grieving to see her distress, told his wife, who was at once beside the lonely girl.

As time went on and Isabella grew older the King sought her companionship to some extent, although Gaveston still held a high place in his affections.

Edward had little sense of his great responsibilities, treating important State affairs in a trivial light-hearted manner. His uncle, Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, was in despair, and at last came to an agreement with the barons to make Gaveston leave the country. He was banished, but returned, and again banished, and on once more returning Gaveston realised, too late, his mistake. Having exhausted the patience of the barons, he was captured, made prisoner, and in the end, with Lancaster's consent, he was put to death.

Badlesmere had refrained from joining Lancaster, when he was making strenuous efforts to rid the country of Gaveston, and this aroused resentment in the quick-tempered Lancaster. But Badlesmere had reasons ; he judged rightly that if he retained his position as 'Steward' opportunities would be sure to occur when he could use his influence, and so it happened more than once. When irritation against the King had almost reached breaking-point, Badlesmere would seek the Queen and explain the situation ; she would then have a tactful talk with her husband, and try to persuade him to adopt Badlesmere's proposals. Several very critical periods were quietly overcome through these united efforts of the Queen and Badlesmere.

By the year 1319, the King had a new favourite, Hugh Spencer, and there was a wearying repetition of the Gaveston troubles. Lancaster, tired of peaceful methods, was again urging Badlesmere to join him. The position was a delicate one for Badlesmere. He was thrown a great deal into contact with the unpopular Spencers,

both father and son, for they met constantly, would often dine at the same table, and there was also a family connection, Lady Badlesmere being first cousin to Hugh's wife, Eleanor, who was a daughter of the Earl of Gloucester. But quite apart from the Spencers, the King was not ruling; his careless behaviour would cause any seriously minded man to feel sick at heart. Therefore, in the end Badlesmere did decide to associate himself with Lancaster, having been forced to the conclusion that the best thing for the people was to depose the King, placing his young son on the throne with a regency.

Gaveston's death had never been forgotten by Edward; he had not forgiven his uncle, the Earl of Lancaster. He meant to have his revenge; he did not mind waiting, but he intended to utterly crush him.

After Badlesmere had made his decision to join Lancaster, the King quickly detected a change in him, and when he realised that Badlesmere—his own Steward—had gone over to the enemy, all the fury and hatred that he had been nursing against Lancaster turned also upon Badlesmere.

Edward could be acutely discerning in his methods of retaliation. He would make a careful study of his victims until he was able to find a way that would hurt them most keenly.

Anyone acquainted with Badlesmere knew of his tender devotion to his wife. The King decided that if he could attack that gentle cultured lady, it would cause her husband far greater anguish than any direct assault upon himself, for Edward had neither sense of chivalry nor mercy. Wishing to make an attack upon Lady Badlesmere, it was necessary, first, for him to find someone who would act on his behalf. He consulted John of Britany, Earl of Richmond. This was not the only occasion when he made use of John of Britany; we shall see he appears again.

Lady Badlesmere, with a few serving-men and women, had left Leeds intending to make a short stay at their own manor-house at Cheshunt. Lord Badlesmere was not with her. All had retired for the night when suddenly everyone was awakened and greatly alarmed by the furious barking of dogs, the tramp of many feet and the shouts of men.

Hurriedly Lady Badlesmere threw an extra garment around her and joined the trembling servants in the hall. Men were trying to force an entrance, and added to the tumult there now came

heavy thuds against the door, and above the confusion of sounds could be heard the splintering and cracking of wood. In a few moments the door gave way with a crash and men poured in through the entrance. A rush was made in the direction of Lady Badlesmere, and simultaneously her servants went in her defence. But courage and devotion were useless against this attack, the strength and number of their opponents was far too great; her servants were brutally treated, until one by one all were felled. The raiders now seized the terrified wife of Lord Badlesmere and bound her fast. She was powerless to prevent or protest while they made a quick selection from amongst her treasures for removal later, and then proceeded to destroy the remainder.

The servant of John of Britany was the leader of the men. He gave a sharp order to collect the valuables set aside, and all marched out, leaving havoc and desolation behind them.

All through the night Lady Badlesmere and her defenders lay bleeding and bound. It was early in December and a bitterly cold wind swept through the doorless opening, and not until late the following afternoon did Hugh Spencer release them.

The account of this attack is given in the *Calendar of Patent Rolls*. It is an interesting fact that they should have been released by Hugh Spencer. Perhaps when the report of the assault was brought to the King he was so delighted that he was unable to keep the news to himself and gloatingly retailed the whole affair to Hugh. Inwardly disgusted with such unchivalrous conduct, Hugh would tell his wife, and when Eleanor heard of her cousin's dreadful plight, naturally she would urge him to hasten without delay to the poor woman's rescue.

These people had been guilty of a criminal offence—nothing less than 'robbery with violence.'

Did they receive punishment?

The following facts are significant and show that an influence was at work 'in high places.'

On December 6, 1319, there is a record of Badlesmere bringing his case before the court at York.

What was the result?

The court dismissed the case.

The poor distracted man must have been filled with a righteous indignation at this flagrant act of injustice. When he thought of

the terror and suffering endured by his wife on that dreadful night he could not rest. Four days later he repeated his complaint, this time at Burstwick. A second time the court dismissed the case.

A third appeal must have been made and at least received some formal recognition, but without bringing the offenders to justice, for two years later the last echo came with this entry in the *Calendar of Patent Rolls* :

‘ Pardon at the request of John de Brytania, Earl of Richmond ’
(a list of names follows, the same as those accused by Badlesmere),
‘ of their outlawry in the County of Hertford *for not appearing*
before the justices appointed to hear and determine a trespass
committed by them against Bartholomew de Badlesmere, and
Margaret his wife.’

In the autumn of the year 1321, a climax was rapidly approaching. The King had been keeping a close watch upon both Lancaster and Badlesmere, and at last his opportunity came. Only his alert brain keyed to a pitch of watchfulness could have seen anything in the following simple incident. The Queen was making preparations for a pilgrimage to Canterbury. Badlesmere, he was aware, had left Leeds for the purpose of meeting Lancaster at Witney, in Oxfordshire.

Once more John of Britany was taken into the King's confidence and the two together formulated a plot.

They decided the Queen must be kept in complete ignorance of their intentions. It was suggested casually that she might break the journey at Leeds, and Isabella readily fell in with the proposal, for she would enjoy a talk with Lady Badlesmere. John was to be responsible for the men in her retinue and he would conduct her on the journey.

All was in readiness. John's retinue appeared unusually large for a peaceful undertaking like a pilgrimage, and it provoked comment, but with a jest he managed to allay suspicion.

In the company was one man, who had been Lord Badlesmere's personal attendant when at Westminster. On the way he overheard a conversation between two other men ; a remark was made in an undertone about the chances of staying at Leeds, *if they succeeded in getting inside*. Badlesmere's man thought he detected a threatening note in the comment, and on arriving at Maidstone, he managed

to be among the men sent forward to prepare the Seneschal, Sir Thomas Colpepper, for the Queen's coming.

The message was delivered by the men ; some little time elapsed before the anxious man could find an opportunity of giving expression to his fears. When Colpepper was given the warning his consternation was great, and with foreboding he assembled the knights and held a consultation. The Cheshunt encounter was still fresh in their memories and within an hour the same man who had been concerned in that affair, John of Britany—a name of evil omen—would be at their gates.

Sir Thomas Colpepper fully realised his dreadful responsibility. There was something sinister in this coming, at this particular moment, of a large number of men, armed, he had been warned by his informer, and John of Britany.

It was all too probable the King knew of Badlesmere's absence and its purpose. John's intention was obvious. The Queen's simple request was a ruse to gain entrance to the strongly fortified Castle, and once inside the treacherous King meant to take possession, and further, he might very possibly arrest Lady Badlesmere with the excuse that she was implicated in her husband's dealings with Lancaster.

With the apprehension of known and unknown danger, all agreed that entrance to the Castle must not be given to the visitors.

The Queen arrived at Leeds, and with the object of keeping her in ignorance of the real issue, John of Britany tactfully suggested that she and her ladies in attendance should remain at the Priory while he would go on with the men to the Castle and make sure that all was in readiness for her. Unsuspectingly the Queen agreed and remained at the Priory. John then hastened to the Castle with the retainers.

At the Gatehouse they came to a halt. Colpepper went forward, and the Earl demanded admission and a night's lodging for the Queen.

Colpepper had his answer ready. The demand had been rude and abrupt, but he replied courteously and expressed regret that, on account of the absence of his Lord, he was unable to admit anyone to the Castle. John turned on him, asking furiously whether this was meant as an intentional insult to his Queen.

The reply came quietly but firmly in these words :

'Neither the Queen nor any other should enter without the orders of the Lord, his master.'

John of Britany gave a prearranged signal and his men made a rush forward in an attempt to force an entrance, but Colpepper had prepared for this contingency. He had seen to the manning of the walls, and with the charge there came a shower of arrows from above. Several men were slain and others wounded. It was enough. John gave an order to withdraw. He was quite satisfied that a damaging accusation could now be made against the Badlesmeres. Had not an insult been offered to the Queen even to the injury and bloodshed of the men of the royal retinue?

John made his way back to the Queen and gave her a description of the encounter. He emphasised the gross insult and dwelt on the slaying of her own retainers. The Queen was at a loss to understand the change in Lady Badlesmere; in anger and bitterness she returned to London the following day and made indignant complaint to her husband.

When the King had been making plans with John it had been arranged that if an entrance were not possible, blame should be thrown upon the defenders of the Castle in such a manner that a siege could be made justifiable. For this reason John had stayed behind to guard the Castle. The passionate accusations of the Queen secretly overjoyed the King. He knew then that the first stage of the plot was a success. He had everything in readiness for the next move, and without loss of time orders were sent to the sheriffs of Essex, Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex to send men, from the ages of sixteen to sixty, to Leeds. They were to be assembled there by the Friday, and any man who dared to refuse would be liable to a heavy penalty. He added that he wished to make it clear that civil war was not intended and that he merely wished 'to avenge the insult' which had been given to the Queen.

Edward's sudden and prompt action was so unusual and uncharacteristic of him that nearly every historian comments upon the fact. This readiness for the next step directly he knew of the success of the first part of his plan is proof that it was a deeply laid plot.

A huge army soon gathered at Leeds and surrounded the Castle.

News of the dreadful situation of his wife, children, and friends was brought to Badlesmere. When he had left Leeds for Witney he had feared for the safety of his family, for both he and Lancaster

knew they lived in danger that at any moment Edward's cunning might encircle and overwhelm them. Remembering Cheshunt before leaving he had made careful provision for their protection. Sir Thomas Colpepper, his faithful friend, was Seneschal; with him was his own nephew, Bartholomew de Burghersh, and about a dozen other knights. Besides this protection there was the strength of the fortified Castle. They should be secure, yet, in spite of all, the King had found a way to beat down his safeguards.

What could he do now to help them?

Lancaster and Badlesmere left Witney and came towards London. At Kingston they were met by sympathising barons and a few of the Bishops. Together they discussed the plight of Lady Badlesmere and those with her.

If they were to collect troops and try to drive away the besiegers, it would mean the bloodshed of men who had been forced into taking a share in the siege. Badlesmere felt he could not precipitate a state of civil war over a personal matter.

A direct appeal to the King was rejected as hopeless. One faint hope, and one only, remained, and that was to see the Queen, explain everything to her, and perhaps, once again, she might use her influence with the King as she had done in former crises.

It was a very small hope, for they knew the Queen's anger was still at white heat against Lady Badlesmere. The Queen felt that she had been held up to ridicule before the whole country, and the King was doing all he could to foster this attitude and keep her in ignorance of the real truth.

But it was a straw to catch at. The Bishops left with the intention of obtaining an audience with the Queen, to lay all the facts before her and ask her to urge the King to withdraw the troops from the Castle and let the matter rest until the next assembly of Parliament.

As he waited for the return of the Bishops anguished thoughts must have raced through Lord Badlesmere's brain. How was his wife bearing the strain of her terrible ordeal? He would remember that she had not yet recovered from her treatment at Cheshunt; ever since that time she had been living in a state of fear.

How were his little girls and his boy Giles, whom he loved so dearly? Were they still safe?

It was torture to him to feel so helpless, unable to help them in any way and to be forced to stand by idle and useless.

Then his thoughts would turn to the Bishops. Would the Queen

listen to them? He knew that they would plead his cause well. Was there any hope, any glimmer of light in the darkness? Perhaps she would remember the old days and for the sake of their past friendship would do what she could for him.

At last the Bishops were returning. With what eagerness he scanned their faces! But it was needless to question them; a glance told him that they had failed.

He braced himself to hear the worst. They told him the Queen had refused either to see them or receive any message.

Their words came drifting slowly into his numbed brain, and one by one, with a sympathy too deep for words, in a tense silence, Bishops and friends left the bowed and stricken man alone in his sorrow.

At Leeds, when the siege began, there had been a faint hope of rescue, but as day after day went by the besieged lost heart. At last news came through, but only to tell of Badlesmere's pitiful inability to help them.

They knew then that nothing would be gained by holding out any longer. The Castle was being battered to ruin and they were nearly at the end of their food supply.

Weak from privation and torn with anxiety in regard to the safety of those who had been placed in his charge, Sir Thomas Colpepper surrenders to his foes.

The cruel King knew only too well how distressed Badlesmere would be at the thought of his friends enduring suffering on account of their loyalty to him, and it was for this reason the King would allow no mercy to be shown to Colpepper and the knights. They were to be hanged—a death penalty reserved for the most degraded criminals. When protestations were made against this indignity by the men, the King ordered them to be stripped of all outward symbols of their nobility.

One knight only escaped who had taken part in the defence, Lord Badlesmere's nephew, Bartholomew de Burghersh. He was a lifelong friend of the Prince, afterwards Edward III, but at this time a boy of nine. Perhaps the King, knowing the great affection his son had for Burghersh, spared his life rather than face the child's look of reproach, for he sent him to the Tower with Lady Badlesmere and the children.

Shortly afterwards Burghersh was released from the Tower, but Lady Badlesmere remained a prisoner for several years, and

when she did eventually gain her freedom, the kind nuns of the Minories took her in and cared for her.

After Lancaster had left Badlesmere in his tragic helplessness at Kingston, he was resolved more than ever that the country must protest against a King who could so misuse his power. He began raising an army with this object in view.

Badlesmere crossed from Tilbury into Kent. On reaching Higham, near Rochester, he was met and welcomed by many of his tenants, and others who sympathised with him in his agonising experiences. His wife and children were shut up in the dreaded Tower of London, and there was the memory of the awful deaths of his faithful friends. His mind was swept by tumultuous thoughts of the dark foreboding future. In a world of intrigue, where could he find peace and rest? He remembered the beautiful Cathedral Church of Canterbury, and St. Thomas, likewise a sufferer at the hands of his king. His soul was filled with a longing to reach that haven of calm and to kneel before the shrine.

As Badlesmere proceeded on his way to Canterbury his followers swelled in number. A long procession reached the city and together they all entered the Cathedral.

Subsequently Badlesmere joined with Lancaster's men. The King, also, had raised an army. There were movements in different parts of the country, and then the two forces met at Tutbury, in Staffordshire. Lancaster held the Castle and his men were keeping watch at the bridge over the river Dove.

Lancaster had been troubled by the small number of his men compared with those of the King and had sent Sir Robert Holland into Lancashire to obtain reinforcements. He was now anxiously expecting their arrival.

Night came and a messenger arrived in breathless haste to say that the guard on the bridge was being attacked from both sides, as a detachment of the King's army had succeeded in crossing the river below the bridge, and in addition to this staggering blow he told of Holland's return with five hundred men and that he had taken them on to the King's side.

The only course open to them was immediate flight, and escape must be through the river. With all speed they gathered together their belongings and crossed the dark waters. In their haste they

dropped the treasure chest in the swollen flood and dared not stay to retrieve it.

In the year 1831 this dramatic crossing, which had been made by heartbroken men hundreds of years before, was vividly recalled by the finding of an old military chest; workmen were digging gravel at a place about thirty yards below the present bridge when they made the find. On opening it, about one hundred thousand valuable coins of the reigns of Edward I and Edward II were discovered.

They fled north, and on reaching Pontefract were met by Sir Andrew Harcla, Governor of Carlisle. Lancaster and Badlesmere did their utmost to gain his help and sympathy, but Harcla was not a man to be touched by the righteousness or justice of a cause. Had the chest of gold not been lost in the river Dove, and had Lancaster been able to offer actual cash, it might have been a different story. He would give no help. A few weeks later he had his reward. The record is in the *Calendar of Charter Rolls* for April 30, 1322.

'Whereas lately, for good services rendered by Andrew de Harcla . . . in defeating Thomas, late Earl of Lancaster, and others of his party . . . and delivering them to the King, . . . the King gave the said Andrew . . . the style and name of Earl of Carlisle, and girt the said Andrew with a sword . . . and further promises to provide for him 1000 marks in land and rent by the year. . . .'

In this way Edward was able to gain the allegiance of some of his subjects.

Harcla had anticipated that Lancaster would push northward and had placed troops at the bridge he knew must be crossed when he arrived at Boroughbridge. The bridge was of wood and concealed beneath was a man with a long spear. Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, was the first man on the bridge, and he was pierced by the waiting man beneath.

Lancaster's men were worn and exhausted by their forced retreat, and were quickly overcome by Harcla's army.

Badlesmere had a temporary respite. His nephew, de Burghersh, assisted him to escape, while Lancaster, utterly broken in

spirit, made his way into a chapel near by and, falling on his knees before the altar, he prayed :

‘ Good Lord, I render myself to Thee, and put myself into Thy mercy.’

Harcla understood the King and he knew of the pride and dignity of Lancaster. Therefore his aim was to please the King by causing the Earl the utmost humiliation.

Lancaster was taken prisoner and one of his own servants was made to remove his livery, and in the garb of an underling he had to pass through an excited crowd of onlookers, down the Great North Road to the river. There he was pushed into a waiting boat and taken by water to York. Some of the crowd pursued the boat, and as it made the journey they were joined by others, who from the river’s banks pelted the captive with mud.

From York he was taken to his own Castle at Pontefract, and later was brought before the triumphant King for trial. At last, after years of scheming, Edward had his revenge. If the sight of a human being in extreme mental torture could give a man any satisfaction, Edward had complete satisfaction.

He sentenced his uncle to death. The first sentence was death by hanging, but this degradation was not carried out. Edward still wanted to see him suffer further humiliation by making him an object of ridicule. It had always been the custom of the Earl to ride a splendid well-groomed horse with the rich trappings fashionable at that period ; he was now made to mount a miserable, starved and dirty horse, a battered helmet was placed on his head, and, wearing a ragged coat, he presented a spectacle delighted in by the coarse crowd. Armed with sticks they drove the maddened animal this way and that way, until the Earl in his torment was heard to cry :

‘ O King of Heaven, have mercy upon me, for the King of the earth hath none.’

In time the hill-top was reached and his sufferings were nearly at an end. Perhaps fear had seized the heart of the King ; he may have seen the ‘ handwriting on the wall ’ and had a premonition of the retribution awaiting him, for the sentence of death by hanging was changed to death by beheading.

The Earl of Lancaster’s life was ended where the windmill now stands on St. Thomas’s Hill.

Southward along the Great North Road, Badlesmere had escaped

from Boroughbridge with his nephew, who took him to the home of his brother, Henry Burghersh, Bishop of Lincoln, at Stow, in Lincolnshire.

His enemies were soon on his track. He too was captured and taken as a common felon to Canterbury for trial.

He was hanged in the Forest of Blean, outside the city.

Then the Queen learnt the whole truth and heard of her own innocent share in the tragedy and the horrible plot contrived by her own husband against her most faithful friends. She was tortured by the memory of her refusal to see the Bishops. Then she turned upon the King, continually reproaching him. With the passing of time her feelings appear to have grown in intensity, for at last she refused to speak to him and his presence grew intolerable to her; she left for France, taking Prince Edward with her.

'Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.' These words can be said with truth to apply to Edward II. First there was bitter remorse; he was unable to conceal his agony of regret and was frequently heard to cry aloud.

Five years later he was fleeing for his life. He tried to escape across the Bristol Channel in an open boat, but even the elements were against him; again and again he was blown back to the shore he was so anxious to leave.

After twelve days of buffeting with the winds he was sighted by his enemies from the land, recognised, and taken prisoner.

Eventually he was placed in Berkeley Castle, Gloucestershire, tortured, and in the end foully murdered by his custodians.

Queen Isabella, and her son Edward III, later made all the reparations that lay in their power to the relations of those who had lost their lives.

JOHN BROOKE—ADVENTURER.

ALICIA FRANKLYN sat under the chestnut tree in her garden. The house was semi-detached. It was called 'Chestnut Lodge' on account of the chestnut tree.

With her sat a friend. They were taking tea together. The chestnut was in flower and the garden was full of bloom, for its mistress was a gardener. The next-door garden was equally full, but of that forlorn shrub the purple veronica and elder bushes, with a patch of shabby grass where dandelions grew. It was Saturday afternoon and very peaceful.

'You have a lovely little garden,' said the friend; 'you are an enviable woman, Alicia.'

'I know it and yet I have times of terrible boredom and depression.'

'Why?'

'Because I am fifty and nothing happens. That is what is the matter with life. Nothing ever happens. One is born . . . one dies. I have an adventurous streak somewhere. Peace is not enough.'

'All the same, other people would envy you. You may be fifty, but you're nice-looking. You have sufficient means to keep up your house and your garden. You have your golf. You sing well—there's your choral society to interest you. You're a reader. In our suburban society you know you're a star. You haven't chosen to marry—presumably you never found your real mate.'

Alicia considered this gravely, her hazel eyes fixed on the sky above the house.

'Yes,' she answered, 'I ought to be thankful. That is what Nurse always used to say. All through life one is feeling one ought to be thankful; it's like saying grace for boiled mutton and rice-pudding. All the same, I want exciting things to happen. I want interests outside myself and the suburb. If I weren't such a desperately bad sailor I'd travel. As it is I daren't. But life needs mystery, surprise.'

'Still,' said the friend, a moralist at heart, 'you *ought* to be thankful. You might be deformed.'

'Yes, I might,' said Miss Franklyn, 'like . . . like poor little Mr. Smith next door.' Her voice was lowered. 'Don't look round. He's at his window reading. He loves sitting there; he's always watching me gardening. It's rather tiresome being overlooked. He pretends to read, but he doesn't. He watches. I can feel him watching. He turns on his wireless very often. I believe he thinks I'll like it. He seems to be musical. He always comes to our choral concerts and he waits in church to hear the last of the voluntary.'

'Do you know him?'

'Oh! no—just a greeting at the gate. He seems to have no womenfolk except a sour-looking housekeeper. He's very shy and he stammers. He doesn't want to talk. I think his deformed back makes him self-conscious. He has some job as a Librarian, I believe, in some old musty-fusty library in town. I see him coming back in the afternoon. I grant you he has a terribly limited existence.'

'There you are, and probably he's quite contented.'

'He couldn't be. Don't look round. He's peeping over his paper at us. I really often think his only amusement is watching life in its quiet course in my garden.'

After the friend's leave-taking at the lilac-bordered gate the postman came down the road with the evening post.

Alicia lingered. The postman is still a messenger of the gods, bearing destinies in his bag.

'Anything for me?' she asked instinctively. 'Oh! circulars of course.'

'No, Miss, there's a letter too; foreign one I think.'

Alicia took the letter and held it in her hand, puzzled, interested yet slow to solve doubt by opening the envelope. She walked slowly to her back garden and sat down in the camp-chair. A square envelope addressed in neat, decisive writing, and it carried an African stamp. Slowly, still savouring the mystery, Alicia opened it and spread the closely written sheets on her knee. The May sunshine was light enough for her needs.

'Seccondee,
Gold Coast.'

That was the address. She knew no one there. She read the first sheet:

‘DEAR MISS FRANKLYN,

You are just thinking “I know no one in Secondee. I have never seen this writing.” Almost I hear you say the words. Probably you are in your beautiful garden among your flowers, or in your drawing-room with its chintzes and etchings and Persian rugs, its scent of pot-pourri and flowers. Do I guess right? Oh! yes, I’m guessing, I haven’t been there. But I know you by sight, by repute, by voice. I know your suburb. You were made for a far larger sphere, but there you are! a star shining for a little world. Will you shine for me—yes! for a stranger? I shall keep my distance here in West Africa. You will never be troubled by me at home, for I am—as you’ll have guessed, a crank, an oddity, a man out of sorts with life. I can’t bear it sometimes. If I could write to one good woman, if I might tell her my doings, my thoughts, my trivial adventures, there’d be some purpose in things. If I could make someone laugh or sigh with me. If, too, Mail days meant letters for me. If a woman like you—but *you* I want—would write to me, tell me the quiet little news of the suburb, take me into your home as an invisible guest, jest with me, tell me how your garden grows, what music you play and sing. Oh! then the loneliness would lighten. Can you fancy it, the thick hot darkness of these African nights pressing in upon one? Can you guess the loneliness? Your soul has so much room, so much quietude for its thoughts, but it needs another. Will you visit me in my African wilds? Both business and pleasure bring me here. I shall take you—with no danger or trouble to yourself—to strange places in the Bush. I’ll show you animals I love, I’ll let you manage my boys for me. I’ll give you chop to eat and good French wine to drink. But you must trust me and must tell me all your own doings, welcome me to your fireside, let me weed your garden. I shall never appear, an impertinent bounder, at your gate. Don’t expect that. But be—in spirit—my comrade.’

There was more of the letter, a description of the voyage out, of Secondee and then rather abruptly the signature ‘Yours, John Brooke’ and the address: c/o Lawrence Trevor-Smith, D.I., at a place in the Gold Coast.

Alicia read the letter with a kindling excitement. Then she sat still, her hands clasped on her lap. The little man next door had his wireless going. He was smoking a pipe and watching her. Poor little humped-backed man! She wondered did he ever get letters which left him stirred, excited. Now at last an adventure had begun. She could fulfil her eager fancies and bright intellect. She would write such letters as a Madame de Sévigné might admire.

This gentle art of letter-writing can bring two spirits nearer than any speech can do. Bodily presences tend rather for separation in friendship; the unfettered spirit can commune with a companion unhindered. Soul speaks to soul as mouth may never speak to ear.

There was a postscript to the letter. She had nearly overlooked it.

‘I shall be very slow in answering your letters if you write—and you *will* write, because I often go a long way off and do not get my letters for a month or so after my relation Trevor-Smith receives them. You will understand that with native postmen and the delays of journeys this must be.’

The chronicler of this friendship can only suggest the correspondence of five years that followed on the letter received and the letter written by Miss Alicia Franklyn on that evening in May. The letters would have made several volumes. Regularly the African letter arrived and often Miss Franklyn met it at the gate in her eagerness. Twice during the time her friend, John Brooke, was in Europe on holiday. He sent her charming letters from Italy, France, Switzerland. He sent her presents, too, from Africa—ivory beads, crocodile skin for shoes, leather work. She sent him books—books that frequently seemed to miscarry. If the correspondence had a flaw it was the unusual time that elapsed between her letters and his answers. It deepened the mystery of the affair. Where did he go? What was his position? There was something so vague about his actual work that she decided he must be engaged in some form of Secret Service.

‘I’m a mysterious beggar, I can’t tell you anything of my job or my income or much of myself,’ he had written. Yet his letters were full of colour and of adventure. He wrote with extraordinary appreciation of Nature. He was an artist in feeling and in words. The loneliness of the Bush, the African nights and days came to her in his letters. She knew and loved his little tree-bear which died of grief when he went away. She watched with him the little deer he called a Dika coming in the dawn to his verandah to seek food and to accept friendship with delicate grace. She knew the bush cat with its sinuous ways. She loved his pets as he did.

And for his sympathy—(although his sometimes came so long

after her own letters) he seemed to understand so perfectly her thoughts, her feelings, her interests. Several times she had rebelled against his strange elusiveness. Would he not come and see her, she asked. But he replied that if he did come she would not know it. He might stand at her garden gate, smell her lilac blossom, watch her coming and going, but he would not speak, would not break a spell which, he still believed, depended on its spiritual sufficiency.

‘I don’t know,’ she wrote, ‘I’d like you to be visible in your chair the far side of my hearth. I’d like you to smoke your pipe under my chestnut tree. I like actualities and visible kindly presences. What do you fear? I’m not alarming. Come inside my gate and say I am “John Brooke.”’

But John Brooke never came. Instead an event of seeming irrelevance occurred in Miss Franklyn’s life. It was, so she thought, only of import to the house next door. Poor little Mr. Smith went out to his work one morning and never came back until he came in his coffin the day before his funeral. Some relation, a cousin, she heard from her own discreet little maid, had just arrived and was in charge of the funeral.

‘Be sure and pull down the blinds to-morrow, Emily,’ ordered Miss Franklyn; ‘we don’t know them, but we’re all so sorry for poor little Mr. Smith.’

Emily stood still at the door, her eyes round with interest.

‘The milkman’s brother was on the ’bus that knocked him down, Miss. He said he saw a poor little hunchback with books under his arm and he seemed dazed like and next thing he knows the ’bus heaves up over something and the poor little gentleman is dead. It was terrible sudden. We never know, do we, Miss, who’ll be next? But if it was to be it was best to be one with no family who got so little good out of his life, being crippled.’

Miss Franklyn was really touched to deep pity. Her own life was now rich in interest while her neighbour’s had seemed so meagre, scarcely worth living. She thought almost tenderly of the little man who had watched her from behind his paper as she worked in her garden. The next morning she saw from her garden the sad little procession set forth, the coffin carried down the short path to the waiting hearse while three men walked after it. She wished she had sent a wreath, even a bunch of her autumn flowers

to relieve the bareness of the coffin. She turned away full of thought and compassion.

Feeling drove her to letter-writing that afternoon. John Brooke was in Africa now. She must tell him the little tragedy of her next-door neighbour. He would see every shade of pathos in that dim and barren life. She was absorbed in the letter when the drawing-room door was opened.

'Mr. Trevor-Smith, ma'am.'

Alicia looked up. An elderly man in black stood before her. She had seen him following the coffin that very morning. She thought he was an undertaker. She advanced, a little bewilderment in her face. He was grave, portentous, a little embarrassed too. He bowed.

'You do not know me,' he said, 'I am only here on account of my cousin's funeral to-day. I was his—well you might say—next of kin. But we were like brothers. We were brought up together. That is my reason for calling.'

Alicia asked him to sit down by her fire. She drew her chair up.

'You will smoke?' she suggested.

'No, thanks. I have come to tell you a story—a story I feel bound to tell you after to-day's sad event, but you must forgive me if I blunder. I find myself in a—well—in a very awkward position . . . worse, I feel myself the partner in a fraud which . . . er . . . concerns you, Miss Franklyn.'

Alicia flushed. She was very pretty with her white hair and rose-leaf cheeks and her serious hazel eyes.

'I can't see that you can have anything to confess to me,' she said a little severely. 'I know nothing of you, except that your name is very familiar to me in connection with West Africa. Have you some relation there?'

'None, but I have a Government job out there. I'm a District Inspector on the Gold Coast. You know my name, you say?'

'Yes, I have a friend to whom I write often under cover of your name, a Mr. John Brooke.'

There was a long silence. To Alicia it seemed to hold a menace.

'You know him?' she asked.

'I did well . . . Miss Franklyn!'

'Yes?'

'You must accept the truth sooner or later, John Brooke was my cousin who was killed this week by a motor 'bus, your next-door neighbour.'

Alicia's hands grasped the arms of her chair. Her knuckles were white with the strain.

'But it's a fairy story! It's absurd,' she cried angrily. 'John Brooke was in Africa and hardly ever came home, and your . . . your poor cousin was a Mr. Smith, a man too crippled to do anything but his job at the Library.'

'John Brooke was that cripple all the same. He was the man who wrote you the letters. And all your letters are stored in his little study upstairs to be sent back to you, if need be.'

Alicia's eyes never left his face.

'Explain! Explain!' she said sharply. 'How could he write regularly from Africa and yet be next door to me?'

'Will you have patience then to listen to me?'

'Yes, but go on. I feel as if I were in a fantastic dream.'

'I want you to listen to me with all your sympathy, for my cousin is dead and he was so much to be pitied. He was handicapped in every way from birth to death. Firstly he was . . . forgive me for telling you such things . . . an illegitimate child. His mother, my aunt, was not married to his father. She hated the child. As her son, his legal name was John Brooke. But when my aunt died young, my mother adopted the child and he was called Smith as we were. I was older than he and we became great friends. His delicacy soon showed itself, and that and a fall he had produced the spinal curve that spoilt his body and his life. Never was a man so different from his own body. He longed always for change, travel, adventure. He hated monotony. Gallant deeds and strange lands were his interests, but all he could do was to take the post that was offered to him as librarian.

'All the time his heart was with me in Africa. I wrote to him constantly and fully, for letters were the joy of his dull, uneventful life. It was marvellous how he absorbed all that he was told of foreign lands and how he read about them. Travel and adventure were his hobbies. I want you to see him as I see him, handicapped by his birth, by his deformed figure and his stammer, and yet longing for big spaces, for gallantry, for love and sympathy, for the deep communing of spirit with spirit—which ordinary acquaintance didn't admit in his case. Although I disapproved I could not wonder when he proposed his queer scheme to me.

'You were the lady of his dreams; very shy, wistful dreams they were. He watched you from far off, always so humbly, though so fervently. And then he got this idea, to write to you in the

character of John Brooke, an unknown traveller, who should do and see and be all that poor Jack reached only in dreams. He read every book about West Africa, he took my letters and absorbed every detail of them. He determined to write to you as if he were the man he wished to be. The difficulty was the addressing and posting of the letters. It was then that he asked me to connive. He was to post his letters to me to send back to you, and yours I sent to him too. Sometimes I would send you, at his request, beads or crocodile skins or some curious thing. You will remember that the parcels were supposed to be addressed by a clerk or—as they were, by his cousin.

‘The difficulty was when I came to Europe on leave. I’m a married man and I generally take a house for my leave; but we travel too, and Jack used to send his letters to Switzerland or France or Italy, always reading and saturating his mind in the life of the place where I was.

‘He was not entirely a fraud, for his real life was imaginative, unhindered by his body. He did in this sense live in West Africa, and he did travel. I believe his letters to you—though I have never read them—must be his own rendering of my letters to him. You will blame him, and yet to one who knew him as I did he was true and noble. He shared his imagined life with you, he gave you what best he had.’

He looked at her, then rose to his feet.

‘I had to tell you the truth,’ he said; but Alicia was silent. She sat motionless, with eyes fixed on the carpet.

‘One must face the truth,’ he went on. ‘It’s the hardest part of life. You are Jack’s judge, to forgive him or to condemn.’

He glanced down at the bent grey head. She took no notice. Quietly he crossed the room and went out, leaving her alone. She heard the front door close.

‘John Brooke,’ she said, ‘John Brooke, you are dead—twice dead.’

Then suddenly her tears came. She stretched out her hands.

‘Oh! I forgive you,’ she sobbed. ‘You are not dead. You’re mine still to love and pity.’

W. M. LETTS.

GILBERT AND SULLIVAN.

BY G. K. CHESTERTON.

No institution was so supremely typical of this section of the Victorian era as that product of the partnership of Gilbert and Sullivan, commonly called the Savoy Opera. Nowadays everybody is talking about the Victorian era, especially those who would persuade us that their minds are wholly fixed on the future. Unfortunately, it is also true that those who defend the Victorian era are quite as unjust to it as those who attack it. They both make the mistake of supposing that, because it was a phase of the English character, it was solid or stolid; whereas the English character is moody and very subtle. On the one hand, the futurists, with the ignorance naturally produced by exclusive contemplation of the future, talk of the Victorian Age as merely limited and timid, a system of restrictions and respectabilities. The truth is, of course, that it was emphatically the Liberal Age, perhaps the first and perhaps the last; certainly believing much more in the intrinsic claim of Liberty than does the age of Mussolini and Mr. Pussyfoot Johnson. On the other hand, the reactionaries are driven by reaction to represent it as a civilisation ideally domestic, and founded on the sacredness of the family. The truth is that it was in many ways the very opposite of this. For instance, the English of this period were the only people in the world who prided themselves upon sending their boys far away from home, to be herded in undomestic institutions and taught to be rather ashamed of being fond of their own mothers. Some, by a similar reactionary illusion, have even described the Victorian Age as an Age of Religious Faith. If one thing is certain, it is that it was supremely the Age of Religious Doubt.

The true definition or distinction, I fancy, is something like this. The Victorian epoch was the epoch in which most respectable people still believed in liberty, because they still believed that no liberty would ever in *practice* invade respectability. Men believed that the consolidated commercial civilisation of England, with its great wealth and its world-wide base, was already cast in a mould of manners and morals that could not really be shaken

by any speculations. In short, the Victorian Age was one in which freedom of thought went with conservation of convention; that is why men like Dean Inge revere and regret it. It was an Age when a conservative could safely be a sceptic; but in these later days we must believe in order to conserve.

One result of this curious condition was this. The Victorians excelled in throwing off fancies, which were rather dreams relieving the general system than visions breaking it up. They were holidays of the intellect, rather than (in the modern sense) emancipations of it. Alice in Wonderland is not Alice in Utopia; she is not in an ideal country which challenges or satirises her own country. Lear's landscapes and travels are really in the other end of Nowhere; not in Somewhere disguised as Somewhere Else. In this sort of bourgeois Saturnalia there could even be a great deal of satire; but not satire that could ever be mistaken for sedition. Perhaps that is what the Victorians really meant by talking so much about evolution; that the one thing quite inconceivable to them was revolution. They would never turn the world topsy-turvy in fact; but they would travel in topsy-turveydom in fancy; and they found it, as they did their annual journeys to Brighton or Margate, bracing and quite a change.

This special type of escape is well exemplified in Opera. *Le Mariage de Figaro* was a light opera; but it helped to produce the French Revolution; which was not a light opera. *H.M.S. Pinafore* in many respects made as much fun of British pride and prejudice as *Figaro* made of the pride and prejudice of the old regime. But we may safely bet that it never crossed the mind of any human being that *H.M.S. Pinafore* would ever produce, I will not say a revolution, but even the tiniest mutiny on the most minute gunboat. The Victorians, for various reasons, felt secure from all practical results; and therefore their satire was all in the air and lacked both the malice and the force of more militant peoples. And, as I have said, there was never a more marked example than this great achievement of the Savoy Operas which held the field for so long as a genuine creation of the national humour and hilarity; and which was the result of two men of genius, and as some held of serious genius, consenting to dedicate their lives to playing the fool. But they were British buffoons; they were only *playing* the fool; anything more practical they would have regarded as acting the lunatic.

Mr. Maurice Baring has truly remarked that we, who grew up

in the great days of the Savoy Operas, never realised how great they were till they ceased. With all the growth of theatrical technique and experiment, even with a certain amount of wit and intelligence lingering in the world, it has been found in fact impossible to do anything like the same thing again. Doubtless it was largely the coincidence that brought together two talents suited for a special tone and style of work. I must speak here mainly of the literary talent; for though even I could appreciate the popular fascination of Sullivan's work, I do not even know enough of music to describe my own pleasure in musical terms. But certainly, in any case, the work as a whole was very remarkable. A distinguished foreign musician said to me that it would be easy to find here or there, on the Continent, one or two particular comic operas as good or better; but of the Savoy Operas there are at least ten, if not twelve, of the first rank of invention; and we had come to count on their going on for ever, like the seasons of summer or of spring.

Some of Sir Arthur Sullivan's admirers, or perhaps some of his detractors who cunningly posed as his admirers, were in the habit of lamenting that he had lent himself (they sometimes said sold himself) to a lifetime of light opera music, when he was originally capable of doing something more serious. Curiously enough, the judgment upon Sir William Gilbert, his great colleague, must be almost the reverse. Sullivan began with work that was more serious and may have been better; Gilbert began with work that was broadly comic and was quite certainly his best. I know he had written some sentimental plays like *Broken Hearts*, and probably fancied himself as a pathetic writer; but that was perhaps no more than the recurrent anecdote of Grimaldi longing to create *Hamlet*. Gilbert was a mocker, if ever there was one; he knew much better what he wanted to deride than what he wanted to defend; on the negative side he was really a satirist, on the other side he would never have been dogmatic enough to be anything but a sentimentalist. The point that is not adequately grasped is that his satiric power appeared long before the Savoy Operas; and was at its wittiest when it was most wildly satiric. Nobody knows anything about W. S. Gilbert who does not constantly compare the Savoy Operas with the 'Bab Ballads.' Unfortunately, while managers still find it worth while to revive the Operas, publishers and reviewers do not at the same regular intervals republish and review the Ballads. If they did, we should know

all about the Savoy Operas; exactly why they succeeded and exactly where they failed. They succeeded because Gilbert had already accumulated in the 'Bab Ballads' a dazzling treasure-house of fantastic and paradoxical ideas. They failed because even a man of genius cannot always repeat his best idea twice. He has very often forgotten what it was.

Oddly enough, there is a sort of symbol of this repetition and relative deterioration in his experiment as a caricaturist, as well as a satirist. To the first edition of the 'Bab Ballads' he appended delightfully indefensible little pictures, grotesque and grimacing, figures with bodies like eggs and mouths like frogs' and little legs like dancing insects'. They were amateur drawings; but they were artistic drawings; in being apt and fitted exactly to their purpose. Afterwards, in a later edition and in a disastrous hour, in some dark moment of mental decline, he actually erased these right little tight little goblins, and laboriously went over the design again with a timid and tottering line, in the attempt to give some resemblance to real human figures; an attempt not merely amateur but amateurish. He actually said, with all solemnity, that perhaps the original figures were a little too grotesque; and this represented his attempt to make them a little more serious. Serious, if you please, as a quality slightly lacking in Calamity Pop Von Peppermint Drop or Mrs. MacCatacomb de Salmon-Eye. The truth is that Gilbert had made the joke and forgotten the joke. It is a thing that does sometimes happen to humorists. And it is a thing that did most definitely happen to Gilbert, as can specially be noted by a comparison between the 'Bab Ballads' and the Savoy Operas. Every single Savoy Opera is a splendid achievement as compared with every other attempt at such an opera in modern times. But every single Savoy Opera is a spoilt 'Bab Ballad.'

There are several obvious cases in which this double operation occurred. I mean that Gilbert first went back to one of his ballads for an idea; and then came back with the wrong idea, because he had forgotten the right one. For instance, in some of his best operas, notably in *H.M.S. Pinafore* and *The Gondoliers*, he seems obsessed with the notion that there is something very funny about the idea of two babies being mixed up in their cradles, and the poorer infant being substituted for the richer. But there is nothing particularly odd or original, or even amusing, about the mere idea of a substituted baby. That baby has been a stock property of many tragedies and numberless melodramas. To blast it with a yet

more withering bolt of criticism, it has even happened in real life. The truth is that Gilbert vaguely remembered having put the joke into a very good ballad, where it is a very good joke; but, in searching for it again, found the ballad but could not find the joke. He did not notice what it was that was really funny in his original fancy. The real ballad, which contained the real joke, which entirely withered in being transplanted to the opera, is the admirably severe and simple poem of Private James and Major-General John. I hope that all readers will remember it; I fear that most readers have forgotten it. Perhaps they dimly recall that the Major-General was of a disdainful disposition:

‘Pish’ was a favourite word of his
And he often said ‘Ho Ho.’

James, the private soldier, was a sadder and more obscure being: ‘No characteristic trait had he of any distinctive kind.’ But this gloomy ranker suddenly addresses the General out of the ranks and says that he has been visited by an intuition:

‘A glimmering thought occurs to me
(Its source I can’t unearth),
But I’ve a sort of a notion we
Were cruelly changed at birth.’

Major-General John ungraciously sneers at the suggestion, though reminded that ‘No truly great and generous cove . . . would sneer at a fixed idea that’s drove in the mind of Private James’; whereupon the General, his better nature prevailing, abruptly admits that the facts are probably as suggested:

‘So General John as Private James
Fell in parade upon;
While Private James by a change of names
Was Major-General John.’

Now that is the pure and holy spirit of Nonsense; that divine lunacy that God has given to men as a holiday of the intellect, has given to men and, if we say so, rather especially to Englishmen. It may be hard to talk about the point of something when its point is its pointlessness. But essentially the point of that nonsense rhyme is not in the rather stale and vulgar notion of mixing up the babies. The point is in the outrageous abruptness with which the brooding James mentions his intuition, entirely unsupported by reason; and the equally absurd abruptness with

which it is accepted. That is a very funny idea ; and yet it was not the idea which its own author thought funny. That error accounts for many of the defects which disfigure the general brilliance and fancy of the Gilbertian Operas. A man can borrow from himself ; but a man does not really know himself. And Gilbert, when he borrowed what he thought was most grotesque, did not really know what was most Gilbertian.

It would be easy to give many other examples of the same truth ; that the Gilbertian Operas, vivacious and inventive as they are, are not the first sprightly runnings of the Gilbertian fancy ; and that he sometimes fished out the wrong things from those upper streams. In *H.M.S. Pinafore*, with the assistance of Sullivan's lively music, he makes an excellent musical comedy chorus of ladies of the refrain, 'And so do his sisters and his cousins and his aunts.' But in its very joviality it has lost the joke ; the original joke suggested by the wooden solemnity of the stiff lines about Captain Reece :

'The sisters, cousins, aunts and niece,
And widowed ma of Captain Reece,
Attended there as they were bid ;
It was their duty, and they did.'

Similarly, I think, his parade of coronets and the costumes of the Peerage in *Iolanthe* is partly a reminiscence of the beautiful inconsequence of the poem called 'The Periwinkle Girl' and the Two Dukes who 'offer guilty splendour' to that discriminating young woman. But he leaves out the fine and delicate point about the adoring dukes ; which is the contrast between these exalted yet degraded aristocrats and the honest worth of the humble youth, who could claim no better social position than that of an earl :

'Her views of earldoms and their lot,
All underwent expansion—
Come, Virtue, in an earldom's cot !
Go, Vice, in ducal mansion !'

But perhaps the strongest example of all is to be found in *Patience* ; which contains a typical example of this readiness to spoil a joke in order to repeat a joke. All the business about the one poet persuading the other poet to give up his poetical hair and habits, and put on the uniform of a stockbroker, is obviously copied from the notion of a similar rivalry in the magnificently absurd ballad of

'The Rival Curates.' In that touching story one curate, accounted the mildest for miles round, hears the hissing and poisonous whisper that there is another curate who is yet milder. He therefore sends assassins to force the meek usurper to assume a gay demeanour, and smoke and wink at the girls. But the seed of sacred nonsense is in the notion of men fiercely competing as to which of them is the most insipid. It is inherent in the idea of a mild curate being jealous of a milder curate. It evaporates altogether with the change to a wild poet being jealous of a wilder poet.

So much should be said to make clear that, if we are considering the Gilbertian literature as literature, and alone, the still fashionable Savoy Operas are not the first or the best work of Gilbert. But they are so very much better than any work of anybody else, that has been done in the same medium then or since, that it is no wonder that his genius, when it had been so exactly fitted to the genius of Sullivan, produced something that was in every way unique; and not least unique in being united. It may be equally true, on Sullivan's side, that his earlier musical expression was yet more individual and promising than that which he showed in the great partnership; it is a point upon which I cannot judge even as tentatively as I judge the literary comparison. Some may tell me that 'The Lost Chord' is more completely lost than *Lost Mr. Blake*, that glorious but I fear largely forgotten sinner. But even if these two masters had each brought to the work only half his mastery, there was enough when taken together to make up a masterpiece. It is a masterpiece of a very singular and significant kind, both as a type of the things of its period and as a contrast to them.

Perhaps the first point to note is that Nonsense was here treated as almost a sacred thing, in the ancient sense of a thing fenced off and protected from intrusion. The history of what may broadly be called Pantomime, in modern England, based on the old Harlequinade with its clown and poker and policeman, ranging through various phases such as the fairy plays of Planché, and now transformed like one of its own transformation-scenes (not to say dissolving like one of its dissolving-views) into the form or formlessness of the Revue—that tradition of the Pantomime had many moods and changes, but it always possessed, both before and after Gilbert, a certain vague implication of infinite possibilities or impossibilities. It was a spirit not only of hilarity but of hospitality. In the old as in the new fairy-palace, all the doors of the stage

stood open. In the Gilbertian fairy-palace all the doors were shut. They were shut so as to enclose and secure the separate dream of an individual artist; something that was nonsensical from the standpoint of reality, but was none the less serious from the standpoint of art. The atmosphere of the old Pantomime and of the new Revue implies, if not that everybody may turn up, at least that anybody may turn up. Incongruous figures from the ends of the earth may appear against any scenery, however conventional or local. The man in the top-hat in front of the Ogre's Castle, the man with the red nose in front of the Gates of Fairyland, was incongruous and was justified by his incongruity. He did not have to match his surroundings, but only to sing for his supper. This naturally led to the limelight being concentrated on the actor and not on the scenery; not indeed on the scene; or even on the play. This led to songs and speeches quite separable from the play, and much more connected with the world outside the theatre; songs that could be sung in the streets; topical songs; political songs; songs that one man could pick up from another without even seeing the play at all. It also led to gags; to infinite, incessant, irresponsible gagging. The player was ten times as big as the play. The ogre and the fairy were nothing; but Dan Leno or Herbert Campbell were everything.

W. S. Gilbert was accused, rightly or wrongly, of being a splenetic, acrid and fault-finding individual. However this may be, in the creation of his art, these vices, if they were vices, were also virtues. He would not permit anything really incongruous to mar the complete congruity of his own incongruity. He stopped all gags so despotically that one can only say that he gagged the gaggers. He would not allow a word of contemporary political or social allusion, beyond the few which he touched upon very lightly himself. His whole conception, right or wrong, was to make a compact artistic unity of his poetical play; and the fact that it was also a nonsensical play was not a reason, in his eyes, for anything being thrown into it; but, on the contrary, for everything else being kept out of it; because its very frivolity was fragility. It was not a potato-sack into which the clown could poke anything with a poker; it was a coloured soap-bubble which would burst if tickled with a straw. In this matter of keeping the artistic unity of a comic play as a whole, Gilbert has rather an important position in the history of modern artistic experiments. It is all the difference between the levity of *Three Men in a Boat* and

the levity of *The Wrong Box*. For the main point about the *Wrong Box* is that it is emphatically the *Right Box*; it is a box, in being a compact enclosure into which nothing *really* incongruous is allowed to enter; and Stevenson hits the right nail on the head every time, when he is hammering the box together. The scenery of the Gilbertian Operas has exactly the same quality of harmonious chaos or carefully selected senselessness.

Thus *The Mikado* is not a picture of Japan; but it is a Japanese picture. It is a picture deliberately limited to certain conventions of colour and attitude; it is, as is truly claimed in the first words of its first chorus, something to be seen 'on many a vase and jar, on many a screen and fan.' And it will be noted that its author was as autocratic as any Emperor of the Far East about the exclusion of sky-breakers and barbarians from other lands. There is not a single European character or costume in the whole of *The Mikado*; and there could not be, without destroying the whole fantastic conception and colour scheme. Imagine an old popular pantomime about Japan, or for that matter a modern Revue about Japan; and the very background of Japan would be regarded as an opportunity for introducing everybody or anybody who was not Japanese. A popular test was almost immediately provided by *The Geisha*; the most famous, or rather the least utterly forgotten, of the string of Musical Comedies which so rapidly attempted, and so completely failed, to fill the place of the old Savoy Operas. In *The Geisha*, which does glimmer faintly among my boyish memories, the scene was also laid in Japan. But it was only laid in Japan in order that Mr. Hayden Coffin, or some such gentleman in a naval uniform, should instantly land from a British battleship in company with an equally British young lady and attended by a comic Chinese cook. In that Japan the ports were all open; in Gilbert's Japan the ports were all closed; because it was the undiscovered island of a dream. Similarly in a play like *The Gondoliers*, the Venice is not really Venetian; but it is really artificial; one might say as artificial as Venice. The author will introduce a Spanish Inquisitor in a black cloak, because he fits into the same sort of Mediterranean masquerade. But wild horses would not have driven him to introduce an English policeman, such as lends a final inconsequence to the chaos of the Harlequinade. The thing may not be taking place in Venice; but it is not taking place in Britain; it is taking place in Barataria, the imaginary kingdom the island of Sancho

Panza's dream. And the Two Kings are not Pantomime Kings, or mere knockabouts with wooden sceptres and crowns; all the setting is fitted to a certain frosty eighteenth-century elegance; the mockery of a Venetian romance. The same scheme of decorative unity could be shown as running through each of the operas in turn. The scene of *H.M.S. Pinafore* is in the harbour, but it is never off the ship. Only one landsman is allowed on board; and he in order to emphasise the jest that the First Lord of the Admiralty is not a landsman, but ought to be a sort of seaman. It is amusing to think what vistas of varied scenery a modern producer of Revue or Pantomime would see in such a story; what grand receptions at Sir Joseph and Lady Porter's town house; what riotous scenes in taverns to celebrate the adventures of Jack Ashore. But in the strict simplicity and concentration of the Gilbertian theme, Jack is never Ashore. He has taken the background of deck and rigging and blue sea; and he sticks to the note and the theme. It is perhaps amusing to reflect that the author of the 'Bab Ballads' was the only Englishman who understood and observed the Unities of the Greek Tragedy.

The next thing to notice is this; that it was precisely because he did keep this comic convention, as strictly and even sternly as if it were Chinese etiquette, that he was able to be a satirist of our own society; almost as airy and impartial as a voice from China. The gag, the topical allusion, the ordinary vulgar joke about the things most notorious in the newspapers, could never be thus deadly because it could never be thus delicate and detached. There was always something rowdy about it, because it was not only an appeal to the gallery, but a direct demagogic appeal instead of an indirect dramatic appeal. It was an appeal to people's momentary political feelings, and not to their permanent artistic tastes. Now I am very fond of demagoguery in the right place, which is exactly where it is not allowed; in Parliament and the places of open debate, which are supposed to express the feelings of the democracy. But in a satire, especially an ornamental and elegant satire, there can never be any place for demagoguery; satire and demagoguery are direct opposites. For it is the very definition of demagoguery that it deals with the obvious; sometimes with obvious and very valuable virtues; often with obvious and very noble ideals. But it is the very definition of satire that it is not obvious, and deals with points of view that are not obvious. And it needs a sort of unreal exactitude of setting and habit which is different

from the rowdy reality of life. For instance, I do not in the least share the sickly and chilly reaction against the traditional passion of patriotism. I do not object to patriotism, at some passionate crisis, breaking out of the framework of art. If a popular actor happens to be acting Falconbridge on the night of a great national crisis, when war is declared, I do not in the least object to his swaggering, sword in hand, down to the footlights, and bellowing to the gallery, without the slightest reference to the play :

Come the three corners of the world in arms
And we will shock them. Naught shall make us rue
If England to herself do but rest true.

I do not mind that, because I happen to hold the horrid heresy that the nation is more important than the drama ; and even that England is more important than Shakespeare—a view in which Shakespeare would have warmly concurred. And if I do not mind this being done to Shakespeare, I naturally do not mind what anybody does to *The Geisha* ; and should not in the least object if the gentleman in the naval uniform became on such an occasion a regular gatling-gun of gags, about British bulldogs assisting God in saving the Union Jack. This is demagogy ; but it is also humanity ; and it matters the less that it knocks the whole play out of shape, because the play was in any case shapeless. But for the purposes of satire we do emphatically want a shape ; something sharpened and pointed and above all polished. If we want people to look at the unfamiliar side of patriotism, at the unpopular side of demagogy, we need a certain conventional calm over the whole proceedings, that people may have the patience to criticise themselves. If we want to point out what can really be stupid and irrational and dangerous about a vulgar and conceited patriotism, we need a sort of ritual of satire that the irony may have a chance. Thus we find it is against the almost monotonous background of blue waves and bulwarks, in the unreal rigidity of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, that the sailor is permitted to burst forth into that sublimely logical burlesque :

He is an Englishman !
And it's greatly to his credit.

And reaching the ironic heights of :

But in spite of all temptations,
To belong to other nations,
He remains an Englishman.

That knocks at one blow all the stuffing out of the stuffy and selfish sort of patriotism; the sort of patriotism which is taking credit instead of giving praise. It lays down for ever the essential and fundamental law; that a man should be proud of England but not proud of being an Englishman.

But the point is that we cannot get these detached or distinguished points of view listened to at all in a general atmosphere of the rowdy, the fashionable or the obvious. They require something like an unusual atmosphere or a rather remote symbolism. A man might make any number of highly justifiable jokes about, or against, Mr. Lloyd George or Mr. Winston Churchill or Lord Birkenhead or Lord Reading; and the jokes might involve real criticism of our political inconsistencies or legal fictions. But in practice, the effect would simply be that everybody would howl his head off at the mere mention of Winston or Lloyd George. The people would not wait for the jokes; the names would be jokes enough. They certainly would not wait for the criticism; being altogether in too hilarious a mood of the public meeting. But Gilbert can criticise a hundred of such inconsistencies and fictions, if he puts the scene entirely in Japan or calls the politician Pooh-Bah.

It is certainly rather grotesque that the satire should have been understood so little that certain British officials gravely discussed whether the performance of *The Mikado* might not offend our allies in Japan. There is not, in the whole length of *The Mikado*, a single joke that is a joke against Japan. They are all, without exception, jokes against England, or that Western civilisation which an Englishman knows best in England. I doubt whether it is an ancient and traditional Japanese habit to scribble on the window-panes of railway carriages; I think it improbable that any native Japanese peasants were 'sent to hear sermons by mystical Germans who preach from ten to four'; it may be questioned whether even the habit of autograph-hunting is confined to the islands of the Rising Sun; it seems probable that 'the judicial humorist' is more often an English judge than an Oriental official; and 'the people who eat peppermint and puff it in your face' were not, I imagine, first encountered by W. S. Gilbert in the streets of Tokio. But it is true to say that this sort of English caricature requires a Japanese frame; that in order to popularise a criticism of our own country, it is necessary to preserve a sort of veil or fiction that it is another country; possibly an unknown

country. If the satirist becomes more of a realist, he enters the grosser native atmosphere in which he is expected to be a eulogist. The satire bears no sort of resemblance to an Englishman criticising Japan. But it has to assume a certain semblance of a Japanese criticising England. Oliver Goldsmith discovered the same truth, when he found he could only talk truthfully to his countrymen in the stilted language of a Chinaman.

In a word, the style must not be too familiar when the moral is unfamiliar. The story is told of W. S. Gilbert that he indignantly rebuked a leading actor who had introduced a gag, that is a joke of his own, into the dialogue. The actor defended himself by saying, 'Well, I always get a laugh for it'; and Gilbert answered, 'You could get a laugh any time by sitting down on your hat.' What is true about a man sitting on his hat and getting a laugh is equally true about a man waving his hat and getting a cheer. It is always possible to appeal to the audience with success, if we appeal to something which they know already; or feel as if they knew already. But if we have to get them to listen to a criticism, however light, which they have really never thought of before, they must have a certain atmosphere of repose and ritual in which to reflect on it. How many of Gilbert's best points were in a sense rather abstruse points. They asked the listener to think about phrases which he had always used without thinking; they pointed out something illogical in something that had always been thought quite sensible. Men cannot so re-examine their own phraseology and philosophy except in a world more detached, and perhaps more dehumanised, than that in which they roar at an old chestnut or cheer at a patriotic toast. To take only one example; there has crept into our common speech and judgment a very evil heresy, one of the dingy legacies of Calvinism; the idea that some people are born bad and others born so solidly good that they are actually incapable of sin; and can never even be tempted to cowardice or falsehood. So long as this is repeated as a sort of hearty and jolly compliment, in the form of saying, 'William Wiggins, sir, could not tell a lie if he tried,' it all passes off well, in the atmosphere of the fashionable toasts and the familiar jests. But that notion of the impossibility of lying is itself a lie. It is one of the worst lies produced by one of the worst heresies. And Gilbert struck that heresy to the heart, and nailed the logic of that lie as with a nail hammered through its head, in two or three lines of the lightest and most buoyant lyrical chorus:

‘ We know him well,
 He cannot tell
 Untrue or groundless tales ;
 He always tries
 To utter lies,
 And every time he fails.’

That is a pure piece of logical analysis and exposure ; a great deal more philosophical than many that are quoted among the epigrams of Voltaire.

It is true that Gilbert had no particular positive philosophy to support this admirable negative criticism ; he had even less than Voltaire. For that reason he did sometimes fall into mere expressions of prejudice ; and sometimes into expressions of bad taste. But the point here is that the satire was often a really intellectual satire ; and that it could hardly have been expressed except under certain formal and even fictitious conditions which make it possible to appeal to the intellect without arousing the prejudices, or even the more obvious and vulgar of the really healthy sentiments. People would hardly have followed the real satire of *H.M.S. Pinafore* if it had been filled with real and rousing patriotic songs as an ordinary writer of pantomime or musical comedy would certainly have tried to fill it. This is not to say that anti-popular satires are necessarily better than popular songs. It is only to say that the artist is generally a man who does one thing at a time.

It would be easy to give numberless examples in which the Gilbertian wit did criticise things that need to be criticised ; and even did so by the right negative standard of criticism ; but it would still be true that there was an absence of the positive standard of perfection. The real power of the Sophist over the Philistine, of the pretentious person over the plain man, could hardly be better conveyed than in the limpid and flowing lines of the song about the man who had a Platonic love for a potato :

‘ And everyone will say,
 As you walked your flowery way,
 “ If he’s content with a vegetable love
 Which would certainly not suit *me*,
 Why, what a very singularly pure young man
 This pure young man must be.” ’

But there is no heroic indignation behind the sarcasm, as in some of the great satirists ; for nobody can feel a moral enthusiasm for three fatuous Guardsmen and an impossible milkmaid. There was

no such prophetic satire as Aristophanes or Swift might have shown ; and certainly no sort of prophecy of the path which the pure young man eventually followed, or the way in which Platonic love came to mean something different from admiration of a potato.

This relative lack of moral conviction did mark Gilbert as a satirist ; and did to some extent mark all his epoch as an epoch. There were many men of conviction still active ; Newman was still teaching and corresponding in his old age ; Gladstone was still blazing away with his discovery of the case for Ireland ; but Newman stood for something still almost alien ; and perhaps even the case for Ireland was the first wedge of such alien things that broke up the Victorian solidity of England. The older Victorian prophets had been earnest enough ; and though Matthew Arnold 'was not always in all ways wholly serious,' Ruskin was never anything else. But in the case of the mocker, it was already true (as he himself hinted) that the mockery had become something like a hollow mask. The original forces that had sustained the hope and energy of the nineteenth century were no longer at their strongest for the rising generation. The light of the great legend of the French Revolution had been darkened by the success of Prussian materialism in 1870 ; the men who had taken the humanitarian ideal simply and naturally were dropping out ; like Dickens, the greatest of them, who died in the same year as the fall of Paris. Nor had any other or older ideas as yet taken hold so solidly of the human mind as to permit of natural laughter or of noble scorn. Hence there were not in this epoch any great convinced satirists, as Voltaire and Beaumarchais were on the one side, or Father Knox or Mr. Belloc are now on the other. The typical satire of this period remained what Gilbert himself loved to preserve it, an airy, artistic, detached and almost dehumanised thing ; not unallied to the contemporary cult of art for art's sake. Gilbert was fighting against a hundred follies and illogicalities ; but he was not fighting for anything ; and his age as a whole was no longer certain for what it was fighting. The moral of *The Pirates of Penzance* is in some ways exceedingly like the moral of a play by Mr. Bernard Shaw ; but there is not the moral fervour behind it which really belongs to Mr. Bernard Shaw, even when his moral is most immoral. For Mr. Bernard Shaw, like Mr. Belloc, belongs to a later period when the controversy has fallen back upon ultimates and reached the ends of the earth. It is not in these new struggles of our own time that we can find the clue to that curious

and half unreal detachment, in which some of the Victorians came at last to smile at all opinions including their own. Perhaps the finest form of it is in a certain light version of the *Vanitas Vanitatum*, such as Thackeray so often suggested; and which is really not unlike a certain almost empty radiance in some of the later lyrics of the Renaissance. This would seem to have been the most serious mood of W. S. Gilbert; and it makes one entirely apt appearance in his most serious play. For one of his comic operas was very nearly a serious play. *The Yeoman of the Guard* is deliberately pathetic; and it marks exactly what I mean, when I say that if Gilbert had been serious he could only have been pathetic. He had not the positive moral resources to be heroic or mystic or dogmatic or fanatical. *The Yeoman of the Guard* is in a Renaissance period and setting; and it contains one serious lyric really worth quoting; as having caught the spirit of the end of the sixteenth century; and perhaps in some sense of the end of the nineteenth. When the hero is going to execution, under Henry VIII, for his sixteenth-century scientific curiosity, he sings words which do prove, perhaps paradoxically, that the veteran song-writer could really write a song:

'Is life a boon?

If so, it must befall

That Death, whene'er he call,

Must call too soon.

Though fourscore years he give,

Yet one would pray to live

Another moon!

What kind of plaint have I,

Who perish in July?

I might have had to die

Perchance in June!

'Is life a thorn?

Then count it not a whit!

Man is well done with it:

Soon as he's born

He should all means essay

To put the plague away;

And I, war-worn,

Poor captured fugitive,

My life most gladly give—

I might have had to live

Another morn!'

That is not unworthy of what it imitates ; and might really have been thrown off by Raleigh, when he gave The Lie to all the vanities of this world, or by Chastelard, when he refused on the scaffold all the ministrations of religion and recited, standing alone, the great ode of Ronsard to Death.

NOTE.—*This essay will be included in the forthcoming book, 'The Eighteen Eighties,' published for the Royal Society of Literature by the Cambridge University Press and the Macmillan Co. of America.*

LITERARY ACROSTICS.

A LITERARY Acrostic is published every month, and the Editor of THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE offers two prizes to the most successful solvers. The winners will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. If several solvers send solutions of equal merit, the two whose answers are opened first will win the prizes.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 83.

'Sink me the ship, ——— ——— —sink her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!'

1. 'And may there be no ——— of the bar,
When I put out to sea.'
2. 'She is true, and you are true,
And you love her and she loves you;
Both be happy, and ——— for ever and for evermore.'
3. 'And, because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the ——— of consequence.'
4. 'By twenty thorps, a little ———,
And half a hundred bridges.'
5. 'And close behind him stept the lily maid
———, his daughter.'
6. 'Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and ———
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.'

These seven quotations are all taken from the works of Tennyson.

RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed on page x of 'Book Notes' in the preliminary pages of this issue: and he must be careful to give also his real name and address.
4. Solvers should not write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.
5. Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.
6. Answers to Acrostic No. 83 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50 Albemarle Street, London, W.1, and must arrive not later than July 19. No answers will be opened before this date.

ANSWER TO No. 82.

POEM: Coleridge, *The Ancient Mariner*, part 5.

LIGHTS:

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|------|--------|---|--|
| 1. L | oa | M | 1. Shakespeare, <i>King Richard the Second</i> , i, 1. |
| 2. E | ch | O | 2. Tennyson, <i>Maud</i> , part 2, iv, 6. |
| 3. A | mbitio | N | 3. Gray, <i>Elegy</i> . |
| 4. F | ligh | T | 4. Milton, <i>L'Allegro</i> . |
| 5. Y | out | H | 5. Shakespeare, <i>The Passionate Pilgrim</i> , xii. |

Acrostic No. 81 ('Caesar Antony'): The prizes, won by the two solvers whose answers were first opened and found to be correct, are taken by Mrs. Scott Murray, Newlands, Scone, Perthshire, and Miss Elsie Rose, 29 Asmunds Place, Golders Green, N.W.11. These two winners will choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

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